

After all this time,  
it's still you.

## **It's Still You by ImObviouslyCrazy**

**Category:** Stranger Things, 2016

**Genre:** Drama, Romance

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Eleven/Jane H., Jonathan B., Mike W., Nancy W.

**Pairings:** Eleven/Jane H./Mike W., Jonathan B./Nancy W.

**Status:** In-Progress

**Published:** 2017-02-18 15:09:35

**Updated:** 2017-11-30 09:22:17

**Packaged:** 2019-12-17 05:07:01

**Rating:** M

**Chapters:** 30

**Words:** 54,171

**Publisher:** [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)

**Summary:** It's been a month since they were taken, since the lab captured so many people they loved. Mike and Eleven struggle to find a way back to each other, and a way to free the people they care about. It feels like they're running out of time, but something has to be done. SEQUEL TO "AFTER ALL THIS TIME." Rated M for smut.

## 1. Chapter 1

Alright, so a certain reader left me a rather hilarious PM, and you can all thank them for pushing me to get this out sooner :) Thanks for the message, because it surprisingly made me happy lol. Sooooo without further ado :D enjoy the chapter. Leave a little review, and I'll get back to work on chapter 2 soon :)

---

### Chapter 1:

Mike squeezed his eyes shut, trying to recede into his thoughts to distract himself from the pain. After a final blow to his gut, the security men decided it was enough. They gathered their friend with the broken nose, then left Mike there in the hallway, bleeding and broken. He pushed himself upright, looking down at his now bloodied knuckle and thinking to himself that it was completely worth it.

He was aware that fighting them only made things more difficult, but he wasn't going to give up his hopeless cause of defending his friends. They had been held captive in the lab for a little over a month now, and it was driving them all crazy. Their family must be worried sick. Poor Johnathan had to suffer knowing Nancy was out there, carrying his baby, and he could do little to nothing for her.

Dr. Walcott was an associate of Brenner's, and he made it his mission to carry on Brenner's work with Eleven. However, that meant that they all were stuck there, until they ran out of use for her, which would likely be when she was dead. The prospect of being held prisoner until death made all of the boys solemn and depressed almost always, with little hope to keep them going.

Hopper tried to do his best to keep spirits up, to encourage everyone not to give up, but it didn't always work. Despite the sufferings of everyone else, the two that had it the worst were Mike and Eleven. Eleven had been forced back into working with them, doing everything they wanted and suffering punishments for refusing. Mike was forced to listen to her scream at times, not being able to do anything about it. When he tried to stop them, to help her, he was

ruthlessly beaten, and Hopper would scold him for being so careless. Yet, he couldn't give up on her, on getting her out of there. He just couldn't.

Yes, even in the darkest times, there was a glimmer of light. Mike and Eleven, late at night, found a way to dodge security and meet in secret, which was what he was on his way to do when he was confronted. Mike lashed out, striking one of the men and taking a beating for it. It was purposeful, though, since they immediately left after the beating.

He climbed to his feet, then stumbled towards the small closet where they always met. It was mostly empty, except for some cleaning supplies and boxes of paper and other things that were used in offices. He looked to his left and right to make sure it was clear, then disappeared behind the door.

Almost immediately, he was met with a hard kiss and arms flying around his neck. He didn't have to ask or say anything, he already knew. It was here, she had made it. He wrapped his arms around her waist and pulled her against him, wishing he never had to let go.

"I heard noises," she said when she pulled from his lips. She saw the blood above his eyebrow, and tasted it on his lips. She frowned. "Mike..."

"I'm fine," he reassured her, brushing her hair from her face. "You look... so beautiful. Even in a hospital gown. I'm so glad you could make it. I've missed you so much." Eleven's eyes started to water, and she kissed him again, even harder, more desperate than before. Mike bent down and grabbed her legs, hoisting them up and turning to put her back against the wall.

"Mike, you're hurt," she panted, gripping his shoulders and trying to slow him at the very least. He was too desperate, though, and so was she. While she wished he would take care of himself, she also didn't really want him to stop.

"I'll be fine. I need to feel you."

"But Mike, I-" She stopped when she felt the pressure of him against

her. He worked fast, but then again, they kind of had to. Her gown was bunched up around her waist now, and he had pushed her underwear aside. He loosened his grip on her a little, letting her slide down and take all of him in. "Mike," she whimpered, and she immediately brought her hand up to cover her mouth for fear of making too much noise.

"I need you," he said, starting to pick up his pace a little, lifting and lowering her faster each time. "I can't stand it anymore. We have to find a way out. We have to." She dropped her hand from her mouth, bracing herself against his shoulders.

"I will, Mike," she panted, her head falling back against the wall, eyes closing with pleasure. "I will find a way." A moan escaped suddenly, and she covered her mouth again, wide eyes looking towards the closet door to make sure no one heard. These moments when she could escape with Mike were the only things keeping her from losing it entirely. She needed to be able to see him. It gave her hope, when she felt hopeless.

It didn't take long for Mike's quick pumping drove Eleven to her edge. He had to be quick, so he didn't bother with niceties or taking it slow. He sped up even more as he felt her start to clench and constrict around him. Her whole body began to shake, then she convulsed, her orgasm tearing through her, muffled moans filling the silence as she shook and tensed against Mike.

He kissed her lips, her forehead, her cheeks, anything that he could kiss. Feeling her skin, her body, her heartbeat on his, all of it was what he used to continue fighting, to refuse to give up. Eleven clung to him, her head resting on his chest now.

"I want to sleep together, in the same bed," she told him softly. "It's so sad at night. Empty..."

"I know, El, I'll figure something out. Okay? Between the two of us, we'll find a way out. I love you. Don't give up yet. Please, just don't give up." He hugged her tightly, then, as much as he didn't want to, pulled away from her. "You need to go back. They'll figure it out soon." He kissed her lips again, longer, harder this time. "I'll see you again tomorrow night. I promise."

"I love you, too," she said, pushing open the door slightly. She looked back at him over her shoulder. "Tomorrow."

He nodded, "Tomorrow."

---

Nancy laid her hand over her stomach, her fingers brushing over the skin there. She closed her eyes, wondering what Johnathan was doing at the moment, and if he was being treated well like the bullshit letter they received said he was. Joy was enraged at the letter, balling it up and throwing it as soon as she finished reading. They all knew it was a lie, but there wasn't much they could do about it.

Next to her, Will began one of his coughing fits. Nancy reached over to rest a hand on his back, rubbing slow circles to help him relax. Will wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, smearing something black and tar-like across it. Nancy's eyes widened.

"Will?"

"It's because they took El," he explained. "She helped me... She kept me out of that place when I slept at night. Now... I'm always there. Just... stuck. She can't help me. They're doing something to her." He wiped his hand on his jeans, then looked over at her. "I'm okay."

"Does your mom know about it?"

"No. She has enough to worry about. I don't want her to know it's getting worse. Please don't say anything. Our priority has to be getting them back. All of them." To say that the loss of so many people, family and friends, was painful was a huge understatement. They were devastated, especially since they knew the truth. Something awful had happened, and the lab was covering it up.

Nancy didn't say anything else. She sat with Will until he fell asleep on the couch, watching an old movie he and Johnathan used to like. She laid a blanket over him, then made her way back into Johnathan's room. She stood in the doorway for a moment, just looking in as his aged posters and dusty furniture. The tears welled in her eyes almost instantly.

With slow, somber steps, she walked to his bed, sitting on the edge at first, letting her fingers touch the fabric of the blanket underneath her to admire the familiarity of it. Then, it hit her, as it did so often, that she may never see him again. Nancy lowered herself down onto the mattress, dragging a pillow to her and cuddling it tightly against her chest. His scent was fading from all of it, though it still lingered a little. She inhaled deeply, closing her eyes and trying to convince herself, even just for a moment, that he was there with her.

Joy heard sobbing from her bedroom, and she new immediately who it was and why. She walked out into the hallway, peering around the doorway in at Nancy. With a solemn sigh, she stepped into the room and sat by her feet. Nancy sat up, then leaned over on Joy's shoulder, and Joy instinctively put her arm around Nancy's shoulders, hugging her tightly and rubbing her back softly.

"We'll bring him home, Nancy, I promise. I will never let those people take my sons away from me."

"He has to," Nancy cried. "He has to come back. I can't... do this without him."

"I know," Joy sighed, glancing down at the place where Nancy was clutching the pillow, over her stomach that Joy knew held Johnathan's child. While she missed Johnathan because he was her son, she also knew that Johnathan had to come home because he was going to be a dad. His baby deserved to have him in his life, because Johnathan was no Ronnie. He would love his child, and he would want to always be there to take care of it.

"We'll find him. They can't hold them forever."

---

Johnathan was relieved when Steve returned to the bunk later that night. He sat up, then looked down over the edge of the bed at Steve. The other boy was clearly upset about something, as his eyes were wide and full of fear.

"What is it?" Johnathan asked.

"D-Derek," Steve stuttered like he was choking on his own words.

Johnathan jumped down from the top bunk immediately, looking straight into Steve's eyes. His expression begged for answers. "They took Derek back into this room, and... I heard him screaming... He didn't come back, Johnathan. He didn't come back." Johnathan walked out of the room, into the hallway, looking across to see Jesse sitting in his room alone now, the top bunk stripped and empty. The tears falling down Jesse's cheeks gave Johnathan the answers he needed.

"I can't believe it."

"They were never going to let us leave," Steve shook his head, bringing his hands up to cover his face. "We're going to die here, aren't we?" Steve asked, and Johnathan took him by the shoulders.

"I'm not dying here, and I'm not letting you die here. We have families to get back to."

"We can't do anything about it. The only person that could get us out, they keep under lock and key. Not to mention how they're controlling her. Using Mike as their fucking leverage. What are we supposed to do?" Steve flopped down on the bottom bunk, rolling back and away from Johnathan. Truth was that Johnathan didn't have an answer. He knew that it was unlikely that they would escape, but he had to try. He had to do something. Nancy needed him. Will needed him. Everyone that was taken needed him. There had to be something. *He had to do something.*

## 2. Chapter 2

WOW, guys you are amazing! After 20 reviews on the first chapter, how could I not update for you guys?! That's so incredible, and I'm so lucky to have such amazing and dedicated reader :D You guys are awesome, and as long as you're all here to read, I'll keep this story going for you lovely people :) Thanks so much for all the feedback, it means the world. Hope you guys enjoy this chapter just as much!

Also, I wrote part of the last chapter on mobile, so sorry for any misspellings or mistakes! My phone likes to correct words that don't need correcting sometimes, and I don't always catch it~ well, without further ado!

---

### Chapter 2:

Mike hopped down from his bunk when he heard a ruckus outside. He walked to his door, which was still locked, as it always was overnight. After midnight, the doors were locked, and they were all kept inside until ten the next morning. That was the schedule, but Jesse was out for some reason. Mike bent down a little to peer out of the small window on the door.

"What is it?" Lucas asked from behind him. Mike glanced back at him, then through the window again. "Mike?"

"Jesse," Mike noted. "They're taking him from the room." Lucas got up, then, heading over to look out of the tiny window with Mike. He was right. The security guards were dragging Jesse from his room, grabbing his blankets and pillows from his bunk. When they started towards Mike and Lucas' room, the two boys backed away from the door together, bracing themselves for the worst.

When the lock clicked, and their door swung open, the guards simply pushed Jesse into their room, then threw all of his things in after him. The door shut again, and the lock clicked back into place. The two boys looked at Jesse in confusion, then at the guards who were walking away now.

"Guess they wanted the extra room," Jesse commented, his tone bitter and solemn at the same time. He bent down and scooped up his blanket and pillow, heading for the back of the small, empty room. Jesse tossed his pillow down, then laid on the cold tile and pulled the blanket up over his shoulder. Mike made a face, looking over at Lucas who seemed to share a similar concern.

"Derek... isn't coming back then?" Lucas wondered, using a soft tone since the subject was still sore for Jesse. The boy on the ground took a deep breath, then just shrugged his shoulders,

"I guess not."

"I'm sorry, man," Mike frowned, knowing that it had to hurt to lose his best friend. Mike had almost lost Will once, and even as a child, that hurt like hell. However, he had the benefit of knowing that there was a possibility that Will was still out there, so the pain was much less for him than he imagined it was for Jesse in that moment. No, his friend wasn't still out there, and they all knew it. He was injured, and a liability. They never once bothered to treat his leg. Mike supposed it was cheaper for them to just get rid of Derek altogether.

---

Later, when the door unlocked for them to gather in the cafeteria area, Mike and Lucas started towards the door but hesitated when Jesse didn't get up. Mike turned, resting his hand against the door frame for a moment. His eyebrows furrowed.

"Jesse. You coming?"

"No," his answer came quick and stern, like he clearly didn't want Mike to try and argue with him about it. Mike knew better than that. He nodded, then left, trailing behind Lucas. They met Dustin and Hopper at the end of the hallway, all relieved to be together again. Steve and Johnathan were let out soon after, and they were all allowed to sit together in the small area dedicated to feeding them. The food was already on the tables, as it was every day, and three different security guards surrounded them as they sat.

"Where's the other kid?" Steve asked curiously, looking around to see if Jesse was with Mike and the others. They shook their head, and

Lucas answered,

"He didn't want to come today." Mike took a deep breath, then grabbed the plate that was meant for Jesse from across the table, wrapping up the bread and apple they left for him to shove into his pocket and take back to Jesse. "Has anyone seen Eleven?" Lucas asked after a moment.

"No," Hopper answered for everyone. "They're keeping her separate. However, I guarantee we're the leverage they're using to keep her in line. It's part of the reason they aren't letting us leave." Mike wondered if that was true, if they were threatening to kill everyone if Eleven didn't cooperate. He hated it, hated that she was forced into slavery yet again, to do the bidding of these mad scientists and asshole guards.

Dr. Walcott came into the room, then, and everyone got silent instantly. They all looked towards him, and the two guards that followed behind him with guns in their hands. The tension in the room was palpable, and Hopper rolled his eyes at their presence.

"Mike Wheeler, we'd like you to come with us," Dr. Walcott said, and all eyes fell on Mike in that moment. He stared at Walcott for a moment, then stood up from his seat. He took the bread and apple from his pocket, handing it to Lucas. Hopper grabbed Mike's arm before he could leave, and they exchanged glances for a moment. "Now, Mr. Wheeler, if you'd be so kind." Mike nodded to Hopper, then pushed his hand away from his arm, walking to Walcott and following him out of the cafeteria.

Everyone jumped in their seat when Hopper slammed his fists down on the table in anger, shaking the whole thing and all of the food trays with it. Dustin gave Hopper an empathetic expression, knowing that the sheriff felt like he was failing at his duty, at protecting them all. Mike and Hop had gotten close ever since Mike started working as the dispatcher. Mike was like a son to Hopper, and now he was afraid for Mike's life.

---

Walcott led Mike to a room in the far back of the lab, a part of it that Mike had never been to before. They led him through a door, where a

giant tank of water sat in the center of the room, followed by stairs leading up to it. At the top, Mike saw Eleven, clinging to the side desperately with a helmet on. Her eyes instantly widened when she saw Mike, and the room got quiet.

Before he could say a word to her, a boot slammed into the back of his knee, sending him to the ground. As he went to push himself up, he felt something cold and metal against his temple. Mike let out a frustrated groan, then lifted both his hands in surrender. In his peripheral vision, Mike could see the barrel of the gun pressed against the side of his head.

"Now, Eleven, dear girl, do you mind behaving for us?" Walcott asked, looking up at where she was clinging to the side of the tank, in defiance, Mike figured. She looked at Walcott, then over at Mike, who had a gun to his head. Even from afar, he could tell she was crying. He had gotten so used to reading her expressions, to knowing what her face looked like when she was happy or sad. He sighed to himself. They really were in deep shit this time.

Eleven pried herself away from the edge of the tank, sitting upright on a metal seat. She stood, holding onto the bars that ran on each side of her. She closed her eyes, and they began to lower her into the water. Mike wondered if this was what they had done to her before, when they forced her to use her gifts for them. This is what she meant by the bath all that time ago, what they recreated in the school gym for her.

Mike watched, for a long time, as they spoke to her through a speaker, giving her orders, having her wade through the darkness to find what they were looking for. It was silent for a long time, and Eleven remained suspended, still, in the water. Then, after fifteen minutes passed, she started to tremble. Blood dripped from her nose, and she started to sob. More orders were given.

"Don't be afraid. Don't fight it," Walcott spoke to her into the tiny black microphone in his hand. His heart twisted in his chest as he watched her suffer, weeping, eyes closed, and panicking at the sight of whatever it was she was seeing. Suddenly she jerked forward, and the helmet slammed against the side of the tank, cracking. Mike jerked to his feet, instinct pushing him towards the tank. His arm was

caught by a guard before he could get to her, and his chest started to heave with fear as he could see the water seeping into her helmet.

"Get her out!" Mike yelled to Walcott frantically. "Get her out of there! She'll drown." Walcott remained still, watching her intensely. Her eyes were still closed, and she started to relax, but the water was still seeping in. She slid from the metal, drifting towards the bottom of the tank. Mike used their distraction to his advantage. He threw a punch at the guard holding him, snatching the gun out of his hands as he stumbled back. Mike lifted the gun, aiming it directly at Walcott. "I said get her out of there, you bastard."

Every gun in the room was raised at Mike, but Walcott raised a hand to make sure no shots were fired, since Mike could and would fire if threatened. No, Walcott needed to stay alive to continue the research, to succeed where Brenner failed.

"Go get her then," Walcott said calmly, motioning towards the stairs. "Rescue your precious basket case." Mike kept his aim on Walcott, even as he inched towards the stairs, moving as quickly as he could without losing his shot at Walcott. He kept his gun raised, even as he backed up the stairs, and he only lowered it when he reached the tank. They opened the top for him, and Mike set the gun down, diving down after her.

He popped the helmet loose first, carefully sliding it off her head, then grabbed her under the arms to pull her against his chest. He kicked off the bottom, reaching the top with her relatively quickly. As soon as they broke the surface, Eleven broke out into a coughing fit, spitting up any water that she breathed in while she was unconscious. He swam her to the edge.

"It's alright, El. You're okay," he cooed to her. When he reached the side of the tank, then pushed her up first, and a guard helped get her onto solid ground. However, when Mike tried to hoist himself up, the same guard grabbed him by the shoulders and shoved him under the water again, holding him there.

"Mike!" He heard El scream from above the surface. The rippling water blurred his vision of her, but he could tell that they were holding her back. The guard pulled him up from the water, let him

suck in a quick breath, then shoved him under again. Mike swallowed a mouthful of water, causing his throat to burn, and his lungs to struggle to breathe. His vision started to blur, and the pain in his lungs was agonizing. He was almost sure they were going to let him drown, and the last thing he was going to hear was Eleven screaming and sobbing in panic.

Then, he was yanked up from the water and onto the landing. Mike sputtered and spit the water that invaded his lungs, his vision starting to come back and clear little by little. His chest rose and fell rapidly as the oxygen worked to replace what was lost, and he pushed himself upright, looking over at where the guard was holding Eleven. Her nose was bloody, and her eyes were red with tears. It hurt just to see her that afraid.

"Next time, Mr. Wheeler, just behave," Walcott's voice came from below. "Take him back to his room."

"Mike," El whimpered. "Mike, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Mike."

"I'm fine, El," he tried to reassure her, struggling to put on a smile for her sake. "It's okay, El. I'm okay. I love you." The guard that he had hit suckerpunched Mike in the gut, then, and he doubled over in pain. Eleven started crying again, desperate to do something, but knowing that she couldn't, not before they pulled their triggers and ended Mike's life. She had to let it happen. There was nothing she could do, and it devastated her.

Mike was dragged from the room, and Eleven was brought down the stairs by her elbow.

"We'll fix the helmet and try again tomorrow, what do you say, Eleven?" Walcott asked as she was walked past him. Eleven turned her head and spit at him, hitting him directly in the face. Walcott sucked in an angry breath, then swiftly backhanded her in retaliation. Eleven whined as the stinging, then she was dragged out of the room altogether. Walcott pulled a handkerchief from his lab coat pocket, wiping the spit from his face. It was rather unfortunate that they were choosing to rebel, but he was sure their spirits would be squashed with a little hard work, and he was prepared to work hard.

### **3. Chapter 3**

**Hey guys! I'm so blown away by all the amazing reviews DX They make me so happy and just fuel me to keep writing so keep em coming my lovelies! Here's the new update, finally, and I hope you guys enjoy it :)**

**Just a warning, before you start XD This chapter will be pretty dark and have a good bit of violence in it, and even some death. Sooooo. I apologize ahead of time, but I hope it doesn't deter you :) Without further ado!**

---

#### **Chapter 3:**

The following days brought nothing but restlessness for Mike Wheeler. They started to keep a closer eye on Eleven, as far as Mike knew, and it made it impossible for her to sneak away, to share a moment at night with him. Those moments were the only thing keeping them together, keeping them sane, and not knowing what was going on with her was driving him to the brink of insanity. Mike knew he couldn't take it anymore. He had to do something, anything, to get them out.

The breaking point was the morning, several days after the incident at the isolation tank. Things had been quiet, albeit still miserable. Suddenly, they woke to the sound of Johnathan and Steve shouting down the hall. Mike rushed to the door, turning his head as far as he could against the window to see Steve fighting with guards as they drug Johnathan from his room. The two guards holding Johnathan started back down the hall, taking Johnathan with them.

"That's how it was with Derek," Jesse noted from his spot on the floor. "Johnathan isn't going to come back if they take him." Mike watched with wide, frightened eyes as they disappeared with the older Beyers brother. He slammed his hands against the door in frustration.

"Damn it!" He shouted, hitting the door again. "That's it. I'm not letting them take him. He's got a kid to look after, my sister's kid."

Mike rushed to the bunk bed. He yanked off the little, thin mattress, then, with all his might, kicked down on the metal bars running horizontally beneath it. He kicked over and over again, until one end popped loose. He grabbed it, bending it back as far as it would go, then with an extra bit of strength born out of desperation, broke the metal piece holding it down. He twirled the pipe in his hand, looking it over and shaking it to judge its weight.

"What do you think you're gonna do? A pipe isn't going to do anything with all those guns out there," Lucas said. He was always the voice of reason, it seemed, but Mike was past reasoning. He couldn't just sit back and let Johnathan die.

"Shut up and help me," he told Lucas, eyes firm and unwavering. Lucas made a face at first, still unsure of the whole thing. However, he knew that they were running out of time, and that something had to be done. They didn't save Derek, after all that they went through for the kid, but Johnathan was one of them. If they didn't do something, they would all just sit back and watch their friends be taken away one by one.

Mike moved to the side of the door, putting the pipe against the handle. He held one end, then motioned for Lucas to grab the other. Lucas figured out what he was trying to do, so he helped willingly. Together, with all the force of two, grown, strong men, they pulled on that metal bar until the metal handle of the door started to bend. Just when they were about to give up, Jesse joined them, grabbing both ends and pulling as hard as he could. With the extra help, they manage to pry the handle from the door. With a strong blow from the pipe, they knocked it off entirely, and smiled when they heard the clatter of the handle on the outside fall loose, too.

"You guys have to stay here," Mike told them, taking hold of the pipe in his own hand again. He was panting now, after the struggle with the door handle. However, he knew that what he was doing was dangerous. "There's no reason for us all to die, and it does us no good."

"You're an idiot, Mike, if you think I'm letting you go out there on your own," Lucas grimaced. Mike walked to his friend, taking him by the shoulder firmly and looking straight into his eyes.

"I need you here. Go get everyone else out, gather them all in one room. I'm going to get El. As soon as I get her, I'm going to plug her ears, so they can't use those frequency things on her. And when we're good to go, we'll come back for all of you. This is going to get bloody. If I fail, I don't want to risk everyone's life. Blame it all on me and cooperate if I don't come back. Okay?"

"You better come back," Lucas said, his eyebrows furrowing. "Please, Mike. Come back." Mike just nodded, not really wanting to make a promise he wasn't sure if he could keep. With the metal pole tight in his hand, he shouldered his way out of the door. He looked down each end of the hallway, not seeing anyone. He heard Lucas and Jesse working together to bust another metal piece free to get the rest of the door handles. He took a deep breath, steadied himself, then ran to the right, not really knowing for sure what direction he'd find Eleven in.

---

He was a little surprised at how empty most of the corridors were. They put a whole lot of faith in their locked door, it seemed. He held onto his weapon fiercely, ready for a fight despite the absence of opponents. After a few minutes, he was starting to relax, searching through each door, looking through every window. His sole purpose was to find Eleven. No matter what, he had to find her. If he was going to make any attempt at saving Johnathan, he needed her by his side.

As he rounded another corner, a guard came into view. Mike dodged behind the corner, taking a deep breath. The footsteps approached slowly, like the guard was taking a leisurely stroll. It only made the anxiety that much more intolerable, as it was dragged out so much longer than he wanted it to be. Finally, he saw the guard come around, and he swung the metal pole with every ounce of his being. It connected with the guard's back, sending him stumbling forward. His gun slid across the tile, slipping from his fingers.

"Where is she?" Mike asked, trying to keep his tone steady instead of letting them hear his desperation. He stood over the man, pipe in hand. "I asked you a question." The guard jerked up quickly, causing Mike to stumble back. A punch was thrown, and Mike was met with blinding pain in his jaw all of a sudden. He blinked a couple times,

but before he could retaliate, the guard grabbed him by his shirt. He was slammed back into the wall, and two hands wrapped around Mike's throat.

"You little brat," the guard hissed. Mike struggled, trying his hardest to free himself as all oxygen was cut off from his lungs. He looked around, hoping another guard came along and called off the one choking him. They weren't order to kill. He knew that. Mike was their best piece of leverage to force Eleven to cooperate. Still, the lack of air was starting to blur his vision. He knew he had to act quickly. He looked next to him, seeing the door and the window in the center of it. He squeezed his eyes shut, then threw his elbow into it as hard as he could.

The glass shattered, and Mike instantly grabbed a piece of the glass. He ignored the edge digging into his palm to grip it tightly. He dropped his hand, then shoved it upwards with all his might. The glass slid into the guard's throat so easily, it was startling. It jammed up, underneath the man's jaw, which caused his grip to loosen instantly. Mike took the opportunity to grab the guard now, forcing him back into the wall opposite of them. Mike pushed the glass up further, meeting some resistance from bone, or something else hard under his jaw. The blood that poured from the wound made Mike nauseous. It squirted in different directions around the glass, covering everything in its path.

"I'm sorry," he said quietly, stepping back as the guard slid to the ground. The man opened his mouth, maybe to say something or to scream for help, but all that passed his lips was more blood, splattering on the tile by Mike's feet. Blood covered both his hands, and drops of regret fell from his eyes. "I'm so sorry." Frantically, Mike wiped his bloody hands on his white shirt, but it only made it worse. His stomach turned and twisted, but he ignored it. No, he had a mission, and he had to go through with it. Eleven needed him.

He walked slower now, still trying to catch his breath. Mike bent down, picking up the gun that the guard dropped, then checked the magazine like Hopper had taught him before they went into the Upside Down after Derek. He popped it back into place, bent over to rest his hands on his knees, and took just a moment to suck in some deep breaths and fill his lungs again. After that moment was over, he

continued down the hall.

Love is a powerful thing, and Mike knew that from the moment Eleven came into his life. There wasn't much he wouldn't do for her, and he knew that everything he was doing was to save her and all the others. It wasn't just his life or her life on the line anymore. As difficult as it was, and as sick as it made him feel, Mike knew he was going to have to kill again to get to her. He was right.

Every guard he came into contact with, Mike had to shoot. They shot back of course, but Mike had the advantage of seeing them first most of the time. After downing three of them, he finally reached a room in the back, at a dead end hall. He pushed through the door, surprised that it was unlocked. Then again, it had been guarded. The guard was on the ground, though, bleeding from his side. Mike had taken his gun and shoved it into the back of his jeans. He destroyed his radio, too, taking every precaution.

Once inside the room, he was relieved to see Eleven, though she was clearly terrified. She was cowered in a corner, her hands over her ears, probably to drown out the gunshots. When Mike came into the room, her eyes widened immediately. They fell on his blood-stained shirt and hands. Her fear only grew when she realized his hands were shaking; his whole body was shaking.

"It's okay," he told her, his voice trembling with the rest of him. She stood slowly, looking around him. The guard that had been outside was gone, and she wondered if he was dead. She had killed before, but it was nothing to her. Anything for the sake of Mike and their friends. However, it didn't seem like it was so simple for Mike. He looked green and pale all at once. "El, plug your ear," he said, walking towards her. She stood still, unafraid of him despite his appearance. She tore at the ends of her hospital gown with her teeth, then pulled loose two strips. She balled them up and shoved them into her ears until she could hardly hear anything. She nodded once they were in place, then reached out and took Mike's trembling, bloody hand.

They ran together, back down the hallways Mike had wreaked havoc through, all the way back to the rooms with the others. Lucas and Jesse had managed to pop all the doors loose, and everyone was

waiting for them. They were all relieved at first to see Mike and Eleven, but upon closer inspection, Mike's state caused an overwhelming amount of concern in everyone.

"Here." Mike handed Hopper the extra gun he had stolen. "We need to find Johnathan. He's not that way," he pointed to the right, where he had just been, "so he has to be that way or downstairs." He was trying his best to keep his voice steady, so they couldn't hear his guilt and fear. Eleven held onto his hand tightly, not caring about the crimson liquid that now stained her hand as well as his.

The group rallied behind Mike and Hopper, following them. Eleven was with them now, and her ears were guarded from any frequencies they tried to use against her. They finally had a chance, thanks to Mike. They would fight their way out, and they would save Johnathan in the process. It didn't matter how much death came from their escape. All that mattered was getting home. The group moved together, and they fought, hard, until it was all over.

---

Nancy was asleep on Johnathan's bed when she heard Joyce yell out in excitement. She jerked up from the bed, looking out of the bedroom door for a moment. The light was on in the living room. After a quick glance at the clock, she realized it was still so early. Joyce was usually never up at seven in the morning, unless she had to work, but it was the weekend. Then, she heard his name.

"Johnathan, my boy, my baby," Joyce sobbed, her voice carrying all the way down the hallway, falling on Nancy's ears. She jumped up from the bed, flying out of the room and down the hallway. She stopped when she saw him, her chest heaving and her whole body starting to shake now. She never thought she'd see him again. It had been so long, she was sure he would die there, in that lab.

Johnathan looked up over his mom's shoulder, and he smiled at Nancy. Joyce let go of him, stepping back to let him go to her. Nancy didn't give him time. As soon as she could, she flung herself at Johnathan, collapsing against him and only holding herself up by wrapping her arms around his neck. She held on tight, sobs tearing through her as they had Joyce upon seeing him, alright and alive.

"I'm okay, Nance," he told her, squeezing her slightly, taking in her scent, wondering if he was dreaming in that moment. "I wasn't going to leave you along." After a moment, she leaned back, looking up into his eyes.

"Wait. Where's my brother?" She was happy to see Johnathan, but she wasn't the only loved one that she risked losing. Johnathan smiled again, then stepped to the side. Nancy looked out of the front door, and Mike was there, leaning against the car. Eleven stood next to him, rubbing his shoulder like she was trying to comfort him. Nancy realized why pretty quickly.

She hurried down the steps, stopping a few feet away from him. He hated that look on her face. She looked like she was shocked, disgusted, and worried all at the same time. Mike took a deep breath, then turned towards her.

"Nance, I-" He stopped when she collided with him, her arms around his neck and her chin on his shoulder.

"I don't care. I don't care what you did, Mike. You came home. You brought Johnathan home. Thank you. Thank you." She clung to him tightly, hoping that she could convince him, even for the moment, that it was all okay. He didn't hug her back like she expected him, too. He kept his blood-crusted hands by his side, balled into fists. Eleven noticed it, and it made her uneasy. Mike was damaged, after everything he had to do to get them out, all the lives he had to take. No, Mike would need time to recover, and Eleven knew it. She would be there. She would help him. Just like he risked everything to rescue Eleven, she would risk everything to help him heal, to save him from the guilt that sat in his gut like a stone.

## 4. Chapter 4

I could seriously brag about you guys all day :) (sometimes I do lol). I have the best readers X) and I love writing for you guys. Because of all your kind reviews and awesome feedback, it's so rewarding every time I update! I smile at every single one and I wanted to give back again so here's another update:) enjoy lovelies!

---

Chapter 4:

Mike peeled his sticky shirt from his body, then shed the rest of his clothing quickly after. He stepped under the shower, letting the hot water wash over him. It met with the blood on his hands and neck, and it ran with the water down the length of his body, swirling down the drain. He leaned forward, resting his head against the shower wall. His eyes closed, and his body relaxed; for the first time since they went into the Upside Down, he relaxed.

He heard the door open, and for a brief moment, that feeling of panic tore through him. His eyes widened and he stood up straight. The only thing that calmed him down was the sound of her voice, soft and sweet, like some kind of soothing medicine for his mind.

"Mike?"

"What?" He asked, though she didn't respond. Instead, she pulled back the shower curtain and stepped in behind him. He didn't turn to her, but chose to stay looking ahead at the wall instead. Eleven wrapped her arms around his waist, resting her hands flat against his chest on the other side of him. She pressed her now bare chest into his back, and her skin was surprisingly hot against him, even in comparison to the water.

"Are you okay?" It was a simple question with a very complicated answer. He was relieved, yes, that he was home and everyone was safe again. However, he was very far from okay. Every time he closed his eyes, he could see that face of that guard as he choked on his own blood. He could feel the tightening of hands around his throat, and

he could hear the loud bang of shots firing around him. Those images assaulted him constantly, like he was still there, in the middle of it. only Eleven, and the others around him could pull him from those frightening thoughts.

"Glad to be home," he said, because it was the only comforting thing he could respond with that wasn't a lie. "What about you?" He felt her shoulders shrug against his back. "What's wrong?"

"I'm worried. You're sad." She didn't know a better word for it, though she was sure there were so many she could have used had she known them. "The blood... Will you tell me?" He hadn't really talked about it, not to Eleven or anyone else. He just showed up to rescue her covered in it, and she was curious. Now seemed as good a time as any to ask him about it.

"Does it matter?"

"It does to you."

"Fine," he sucked in a deep breath, but she kept her grip on his torso. Mike lifted his hands, looking at where the blood had crusted and the water had yet to wash it away. A guilty ridden frown warped his features. "I did what I had to do, El. I killed a man with my own hands. He was just doing his job, and I..." Mike knew it had been life or death for him, but it didn't make him feel any better. It didn't make him feel like it was okay to murder people. "I stabbed him, and it just poured out everywhere. All over both of us."

"You had to," she told him once he was done talking. She wouldn't push anymore; she just had to know where all that blood came from. "You had to, Mike." She could relate to an extent. However, Eleven wasn't raised with the same kind of morals that Mike was. She was bred to kill, as far as she was concerned. They didn't instill in her how wrong it was to take a life. However, Mike had that sort of innocence before everything happened. "You saved us."

"I know," he sighed. "I know I did, and I'm so happy to be here, with you. To know everyone is home and safe, I just..." He trailed off, not really having the right words to express how he felt. It was difficult, and even if he tried, he wasn't sure that Eleven would understand.

"It's alright, El. I'll be okay." He turned, finally, and hugged her back. He tilted her face upwards and met her lips with his, kissing her softly for a long moment.

It felt so good, to be back with her again. To relax with her, to kiss her, all of it was amazing. Despite the horrors he witnessed, and the suffering he endured, all that mattered was being together again, without hiding in a closet or being dragged apart shortly after. They could finally relax together, sleep together, and wake up next to one another. He should just be happy. Eleven should be enough to make him feel okay again. Maybe in time, she would be. However, with all of it so fresh in his mind, replaying over and over, it was impossible to just be okay.

Every one needed time to heal. Eleven suffered in that lab as well, forced to do Dr. Walcott'a bidding no matter how painful or exhausting the task. Still, Eleven had been raised with that struggle. When she was young, Papa forced her to do all sorts of things. However, this time, they could push her harder and further because they had Mike and the others held captive. She would bare her own scars, but the only thing that mattered was helping Mike heal.

Later that night, after they both fell asleep, a horrible nightmare woke Mike in the middle of the night. He jerked up from the mattress, his hair plastered to his forehead from sweat, and cried out for Eleven. She sat up beside him, turning quickly to answer his call.

"You were gone," he panted. "I had to..." To kill again. He didn't want to say the words, so he let them remain on his lips, unspoken. Eleven knew what he meant, and she frowned.

"I'm here." She put a hand on his damp back, then rested her head on his firm shoulder. "I'm not gone." He clung to her, eyes closing to try and calm himself. Mike took deep breaths, slow and steady, until the panic subsided from his chest.

"I'm sorry I woke you up," he told her after a few minutes. "You can go back to sleep now." Mike laid back down, letting his head and body sink down into the soft bed and pillows. It was just another reminder that he was home, next to Eleven where he belonged. She laid down with him, curling her body against his and clinging to his

arm.

"Mike... will be okay..." Better words escaped her, but she hoped he understood. The pain would fade away eventually, and he would get better. The fear, and the guilt, would only last so long. They never had a choice. It was kill or be killed, but she knew that didn't exactly help Mike at the time. Maybe one day, when that realization sinks in, but not now. Not so soon after. No, Mike still needed time and help. Eleven cursed herself for not being better at comforting him, and not having the right words to say at the right times. If she was better at it, maybe he'd get better sooner.

---

Nancy shivered a little as Jonathan's lips met her stomach. Chills spread down her legs, and up her chest. He smiled at the tiny, visible bumps, then lifted his lips to meet hers. She wrapped her arms around his neck, pulling him closer to deepen the kiss.

"I missed you so much," she sighed once she pulled away to breathe. "I'm so happy... that you're finally home." Johnathan rolled over to lay by her side, his hand trailing back down to her stomach, letting his fingertips ghost over the soft skin and imagining what lay underneath.

"It's all thanks to Mike. He saved everyone." He looked over at Nancy, his expression darkening slightly. "They were going to kill me and Steve and everyone but Mike. Even he would have to go eventually, but not until they were done with Eleven. We were all expendable, except Mike. I was the next one to go. They took me to a separate room and strapped me down to a chair. If Mike didn't do something when he did, I would have been killed or worse."

"Enough," she said, bringing her hand to his cheek. She brushed her thumb over his lips then left it there to silence him. "I don't want to know anymore. I hate thinking about what you and my brother went through. I've never seen Mike so... in pieces before. And I don't want to imagine my life without you, so just... stop talking."

"Alright," he agreed, sliding his arm underneath her to draw her closer. He kissed the top of her head. "You're right. We're home, and that's all that matters." He wished that was true. Everyone that the

lab took hostage had wounds to mend. It was the closest to death most of them had ever come to, and the horrors of the lab were endless. Eleven's screams, the awful food they received only once a day, all of it was a lot to just forget so quickly. He wondered how everyone else was doing, especially Mike.

"I should've done something."

"What could you have done?" Johnathan raised an eyebrow at her. "You're pregnant. Not to mention that you're mixed up with my family, and everyone thinks we're crazy. No one would have believed you, and you couldn't do anything on your own."

"I just... I should have tried."

"No, Nance. You shouldn't have. This," Johnathan said, flattening his hand against Nancy's stomach. "This is what matters the most now. Protecting this." She blushed slightly, then nodded. He was right, but at the same time, Johnathan was her fiance now, her everything. Not to mention, she didn't want her baby growing up without its father. It didn't really matter, though. Not anymore. It was over, and they were all home. She knew she should just take it as is and be happy.

---

Mike was pouring himself a glass of orange juice, the only thing that hadn't gone bad while they were gone other than the water. He downed it quickly, enjoying the taste after having such bland food in the lab. He quickly started to pour another glass when he heard a knock on the door.

Eleven bounced to it from the couch, pulling it open quickly. Her eyes widened though, and Mike realized why pretty quickly. Jesse stood there, a duffel bag slung over his shoulder, hair disheveled and dark circles under his eyes. Mike sighed, then set his glass down.

"You alright, man?" Mike asked, heading to the door. Jesse looked like hell, even more so than Mike. Eleven didn't like Jesse, not really, after everything he put her through. However, even she couldn't help but feel sympathy for the clearly distressed man.

"I don't have anywhere to go. Without Derek, I can't afford the

apartment. They're kicking me out. I was gone a month, and they won't give me a break. I can't tell them the truth, so I guess I don't blame them." He looked at his feet. "Can I just... crash here for a little bit?"

Eleven and Mike looked at each other. Jesse had put Eleven through a lot, but Eleven knew that Mike had forgiven him. They found mutual respect, and Jesse apologized for everything once or twice during their while experience. Derek was Jesse's best friend and roommate, and he was gone. A victim of the lab.

"Yes," Eleven answered first, knowing she was the only reason Mike was hesitating. Jesse looked up at her, a little shocked by her willingness to help him after everything. "Mike?"

"Uh, yeah," Mike agreed, nodding his head. "If she's okay with it, I am. There's an extra bedroom. It's tiny, like it was supposed to be an office or storage room or something. We'll stick a small bed in there, but until then, you can take the couch."

"Mike, thank you," Jesse said, eyes red and watery. "Thank you so much." Mike reached out to put a hand on his shoulder, offering a small, polite smile.

"You lost someone important to you. Then, to come home and lose your house... Seems like you could stand to catch a break. Come in." He stepped to the side and let Jesse in. Eleven watched as Mike led Jesse inside, admittedly a little uneasy about it. Jesse was still the person who pretended to be her friend to lure her and hand her over to the lab. He was still the one who held her down while he and his friend cut her hair.

Despite what he did, Eleven knew that Jesse had a reason for most of it. He was trying to save his sister, when he first sold her out, and that was something Eleven could understand. Even though he'd apologized and made up for the things he'd done, having someone else, a stranger, in their house made her nervous. She hoped he figured things out soon, so he could leave. That way, Eleven could focus on helping Mike, not Jesse.

## 5. Chapter 5

**SORRY FOR THE WAIT.** Things got busy, then rough, then busy again D: I've been working a lot, doing college, and then got bummed out because my "friends" bailed on me two days in a row. Sighhhhh. But I am back, and the next update won't be so long in between. Sorry again D: ILL APOLOGIZE WITH SMUT. (hint hint) I also am still running the forum, which you guys should feel free to check out! Check the link below if you're interested :) otherwise, enjoy the chapter my loves!

[forum/Stratis-A-City-in-Layers/198311/](http://forum/Stratis-A-City-in-Layers/198311/)

---

Chapter 5:

Eleven woke with a start when she heard someone cry out. She jerked upright in bed, looking around as her eyes tried to adjust to the dark enough to let her see. Beside the bed, on the side that Mike should have been sleeping, she saw a shadow that gave the situation away. Eleven crawled over the bed, then slid down onto the floor by the hunched over figure.

Mike was sitting there, his back against the bed, rubbing his hands hard against the rug underneath him. Tears were streaming down his face, and his eyes were squeezed shut. Eleven just watched him for a moment, confused and wondering what he was doing in the middle of the night, scraping his palms against the carpet. After a moment, she reached out and put a hand on his shoulder.

"Mike?"

"It's sticky," he whined, a sort of pained sound that Eleven had never really heard from him before. It sent an ache rippling through her chest, a mixture of sorrow and worry. She lifted her hand to his face. "I can still feel it. It's all over me."

"What?"

"It's thick and sticky, El," he breathed, continuing to scrape his hands

against the rug over and over again. "It's stuck to my hands. It's on my face." When he lifted a hand to touch his face, Eleven quickly caught his wrist. Her eyebrows furrowed as she turned his hand towards her. Even through the darkness, she could see the scrapes and carpet burns on his hand. She held it firmly.

"Mike, stop," she told him, "please." He opened his eyes finally, to look at her. They widened a bit, like he had suddenly come to his senses. Mike blinked a few times, then turned his gaze away from her, slowly prying his hand from her grasp.

"I'm sorry, El. I don't know what came over me." It was a nightmare, as far as he knew. He dreamed that he was looking down at himself, then up into a mirror, and his arms and face were covered in blood. He tried to wash it off, tried to wipe it away, but it was stuck to him like a thick, crusty glue. He shook the image away, bringing his attention back to Eleven. "It was a night terror. I got them a few times after you disappeared, when I was a kid."

"I'm sorry," she frowned, wrapping her arms around his neck and hugging him tightly. "Mike, I'm sorry." She wasn't sure what else to say. Eleven wasn't a master in comforting people like Dustin, nor did she know enough about feelings to really convince him that it was okay, and that it was normal to feel how he was feeling. Mike hugged her back for a moment, then pushed away to stand up, offering his hand to her, which she gladly took.

He laid back on the bed, and Eleven crawled in after him. She curled up at his side, her hand sliding underneath his damp tee shirt to rest on his bare stomach. He was cold to the touch, and she didn't like it. Mike was usually so warm, so much so that at night, sometimes she hardly even needed a blanket when she was snuggled up close to him like she liked to be.

"Did I scare you?" Mike asked after a moment, and she nodded her head against his firm chest. "Sorry, El. I didn't mean to. I don't think I'll be able to go back to sleep, so you don't have to worry about another one of those."

"I will stay up." She offered, sitting up on her elbow to look him in the eyes. He flashed a soft smile, then leaned up to kiss her.

"You don't have to."

"I will," she said a little more determined this time. "I will, Mike." He rested a hand on her cheek, then brought her down for another kiss. This kiss was deeper, more needy than the one before. Eleven sucked in a deep breath, then rolled over. She knew one definitive way to get his mind off of what he went through, and whatever nightmare plagued him earlier. She knew exactly what she could do.

She straddled his waist, her knees pressing onto the bed on either side of his hips. She bit into her lip for a moment, then slid both of her hands under his shirt. Eleven could warm him up, too, she figured. It wasn't like they hadn't been terribly deprived of sweet, gentle moments of intimacy like they used to share before everything happened. She reached down to grab his hands then.

"El," he breathed her name. His mind was clearly focused on her instead of his nightmare. With his hands in hers, she brought them up to her chest, laying them over each breasts with only a thin slip of fabric separating his palms from her bare skinned chest. "El, you don't have to."

"I want to. I want *you* to." She sighed a little as his hands began to move, kneading her breasts, cupping and groping, fingers flicking over that oh so sensitive center. Her breaths started to quicken, gradually, as she became more desperate for his touch little by little. His hands left her breasts, much to her disappointment, and they slid down her sides, down to her hips.

"I've missed this," he said softly, deep in thought. Those quick, rushed moments in the closet together were nothing compared to the moments of intimacy they had at home, where they could take their time and really enjoy each other. "Are you sure?" He asked after a moment of admiration, looking up into her eyes. She nodded, then slid down from his hips. With steady hands, she grabbed the hem of his boxers and pulled them down his legs. "El, wait, you—" His words caught in his throat as her lips wrapped around his already stiff member.

She grabbed onto him with one hand, while working her mouth up and down repeatedly, like she knew to do from their past experiences

together. Mike whimpered softly, and the corners of her mouth tugged upwards in delight. There was something very lovely about the sounds that Mike made while they were being intimate. They were always short and sweet, not letting out too much for one reason or another.

After a couple minutes, Mike couldn't hold back anymore. He sat up, pulling himself away from her. He grabbed her by the shoulders at first, spinning her around and pushing her down onto all fours in front of him towards the end of the bed. Her hands grabbed clumps of the sheets below then at Mike pushed her tee shirt up, then worked her underwear down her legs as she had done to him.

With one hand on her lower back to hold her in place, Mike positioned himself, surprised to find she was already wet. He looked up at her, raising an eyebrow, which only caused her to blush. She opened her mouth to say something along the lines of 'stop' or 'don't be mean,' Mike was sure, but instead, she only let out a gasp when Mike pushed into her, the entire length of his member burying itself inside of her without giving much time for her to adjust. Her body fought against him, trying to force him out, but he held onto her hips firmly to keep himself in place.

"Jesse's outside," he reminded her. She looked back at him with burning cheeks and a narrowed gaze. "Just saying," he chuckled. "I don't know if I like the idea of him hearing the sounds you make when I'm inside of you."

"Stop," she panted, gripping tightly at the sheets balled in her fists. "Stop... teasing." She struggled to find the right word, but she remembered Mike using it before.

"I thought you liked when I teased you." Her silence only reaffirmed his suspicions, and it made him chuckle to himself. He brushed his thumbs over the soft skin of her hips, then started moving his own back and forth, starting a slow, but steady pace with his movements. Her breaths became more ragged, more unsteady, as she tried to bite back any sounds of pleasure.

"Mike," she whined softly after a minute, and he took it as a cue to speed up a little. She yelped at the first sped up thrust, and Mike

smirked to himself. When Eleven lifted a hand to cover her mouth, it only spurred him on more. He was caught between wanting to make it feel so good that she couldn't hold her noises back, and making sure Jesse didn't hear them. Mike figured their guest was probably asleep, so the part that wanted to force noises out of her was winning over.

His hand reached up instinctively, burying in the back of her hair, the waves tangling with his fingers easily. He pulled back lightly, not enough to hurt her, but enough to draw another unplanned gasp from her lips.

"Mike," she cried out as he sped up again. Her hand flew up to cover her mouth once again, her eyes squeezing shut as she tried to silently adjust to the change of pace. Mike was pounding away, not caring anymore if she was noisy, though it turned him on a little to see her struggling to stay quiet. Her moans were muffled by her hand now, but he felt victorious anyways. "P-please," she said, temporarily removing her hand from her mouth. "Please, Mike. Let me."

"Let you?"

"Please?"

"Let you what?" He asked, though he knew the answer. He just liked to torture her sometimes. She never responded, though, since she wasn't sure of the right word or expression to explain the feeling that only Mike could give her, that explosive finale to their moments of intimacy. He figured it was time to let her reach her end. He pushed her down into the mattress, sitting up on his knees to get deeper, to move faster. Eleven bit into the sheets, her hands gripping them just as tight as before now, as she let out all the sounds she wanted.

"There!" She cried out. "There, Mike. There." He continued with the same pace, the same spot, until he felt her entire body tense and tighten around him. She let out one last, loud moan, her back arching inward. Her hand flew back instinctively to push him back, to free herself from any more stimulation as she could hardly handle the orgasm that tore through her. He backed off, running his hand up and down her leg softly, a look of triumph and amusement on his face as he watched her convulse for a moment before rolling onto her

back.

"Is that what you wanted?" He asked.

"Yes," she panted. "That."

"Good." He leaned up, hovering over her for a moment to place a kiss on her forehead. "Want to hop in the shower with me?" She smiled up at him, then nodded. He took her hand, jumped off the edge of the bed, then lifted her behind him. "Let's go then." He threw an arm around her to draw her close, then led the way into the bathroom, more than happy that he was awake now, and that he had almost completely forgotten about everything bad that lingered in the back of his mind. Looks like Eleven found a way to help him after all.

## 6. Chapter 6

Hey guys! So I really had intended to update sooner, but as fate would have it, my boyfriend and I ended up adopting a dog XD He's super cute and super friendly, and we've just been trying to get him adjusted and stuff for the past couple days. The people who had him before us didn't take care of him, so we've had to groom him and treat him for fleas and everything else. SOOOOO. Sorry for the late update, but I hope you enjoy anyways :) Appreciate the patience, I really do.

---

Chapter 6:

Mike stopped for a moment, taking deep breaths to try and get his panting under control. Ever since returning from the lab, he felt this constant restlessness that was hard to satiate. He figured there was no point in wasting it, so he tried to put it to good use. He had been meaning to exercise, and a long morning jog was a good way to temporarily ease the anxiousness that he felt while sitting around and doing nothing. It was like being still felt similar to waiting for something awful to happen, to come and snatch him away from El again.

He reached into his pocket and clicked his old walkman off, pulling the bulky headphone from his head and letting them rest around his shoulders. He looked around at the woods that surrounded him, briefly thinking back to when they went into the Upside Down after Jesse's friend, Derek. The woods then were so menacing, but now, back in his own dimension, everything seemed so bright and peaceful, yet also felt like a cover for something horrible lurking just beyond.

After suffering the way he did, he figured there wouldn't be any trust in the world, and his moments of peace would be significantly less frequent than before. Mike wondered if he'd ever get that feeling of being content back, of being totally at ease and alright with the world and what was happening. Moments like that usually came from Eleven, but not even she was enough on her own to give him that peace anymore.

He leaned against the nearest tree, the bark digging into his back through the thin fabric of his tee shirt. Mike didn't mind much, since it was just a relief to take the entirety of his weight off of his aching feet. With a groan, he lowered himself to the ground, taking a rest for a moment so he didn't push himself too far. While he should have been sickened by the woods, terrified of what lurked in the trees above, he couldn't help but feel an odd sense of admiration for how pretty the day was, and how the light beams that reached through the trees danced among the leaves on the ground.

It was a beautiful day. The horrors that lurked in his mind couldn't change that, nor could they make it untrue. It was pretty outside, and Mike could, for a moment, just enjoy it, admire it. Soon, he'd had to return home, to Jesse, to his apartment and a million other reminders there. But for now, he would just sit against the tree and catch his breath until he had enough in him to jog back home.

---

Eleven waited anxiously for Mike to return from his run. She had insisted that she accompany him, but *he* insisted that she stay home. After awhile of soft banter, she finally gave in and let him go alone. She laid on the couch, curled up with a pillow and watching some cheesy horror movie on the television about a big bug that was killing people. It was nasty, but hardly as terrifying as the people on the television seemed to think it was.

Jesse came from the spare room, immediately taking note of her on the couch.

"You alright?" He asked, though he wasn't sure he had a right to. He'd hurt her once, to save his sister, then another time for revenge. In both of those times, he destroyed any chance of having her trust or Mike's, at least in full. Eleven glanced up at him over the back of the couch, watching as he made his way into the kitchen. She was still unsure of his presence in the house, but Mike trusted him, so she tried to as well.

"Mike's not home."

"I'm sure he's fine," he tried to reassure her on instinct. "He's a tough guy."

"Tough," Eleven repeated the word, nodding in agreement. Mike was tough. He was strong when he needed to be strong, and he fought when he needed to fight. Jesse was right, oddly enough. Mike was probably fine, and Eleven shouldn't worry so much. However, after everything that happened, and the trauma that Mike suffered through at the lab and even after, it was hard not to worry about him.

"Yeah, tough," Jesse chuckled a little. "He's the only reason we got out of there alive." It was odd how nonchalant Jesse could talk about the lab, like it didn't affect him the same way it affected Mike. She guessed it didn't, which made sense. He didn't go through the same things. Then again, Jesse had lost Derek. He even took a life when they were escaping. How was it that Jesse was fine, and Mike was not.

"How?" She blurted out without thinking. "How are you... okay?"

"Okay?" He questioned, raising an eyebrow when he looked back at her. "What do you mean? How am I handling this all so well?" She nodded, which made a little sense. "Mike's a better person than I am," he explained as simply as he could, knowing she lacked an extensive vocabulary. "He cares, and I just... don't. Not as much. The only things I really cared about were my sister and Derek, and they're both gone."

"Aren't you sad?"

"About Derek? Of course I am, but I also know he'd kick my ass if I sat around moping all damn day," Jesse shrugged. "I'll move on, and once I find a job, I'll be getting out of your hair."

"You killed someone."

"I did," Jesse nodded. "It's not fun, but if it was me or him, I wanted it to be him. Nothing to feel bad about there." He felt like she did in that sense. She had killed before, but it was in defense of Mike and the others, as well as herself. If she was being threatened, she didn't mind doing what she had to do to protect herself. "Mike doesn't think like that, though."

"Why?" She wondered, her eyebrows furrowing.

"Because he's so nice," Jesse explained. "Mike doesn't think it matters if it's life or death. He thinks she should have found another way. In his mind, the guard was just doing his job. He probably had a family, too, which makes it that much harder for Mike to deal with. To him, killing anyone is murder, even if it was self defense. While he's tough when he has to be, Mike's generally a pretty soft guy with most things."

"Soft," she frowned at that. Mike shouldn't be soft. Soft was making him sad.

---

When Mike finally came back, he headed straight for the bathroom, in desperate need of a hot shower to help him relax and ease the pressure off his now tense muscles. He smiled over at Eleven, who was sitting on their bed as he passed by to get to the bathroom. She stood before he could disappear behind the door, hoping to maybe see if she could do anything to make him happy.

"Are you okay?" She asked him calmly. Mike shrugged his shoulders,

"I'm alive. That's the most I could have hoped for."

"But not... okay?"

"El, you worry too much," he frowned at her. "I'm okay, I guess. I mean... whatever this is... won't go away overnight. You have to understand that. It's a work in progress, so just... stop stressing so much. You're going to make yourself sick with worry." He hated that she was so panicked about his condition all of the time. If he could have just magically fixed himself, he would have. At least that way she could finally relax.

"Can I help?"

"You help by being here," he told her, which wasn't entirely untrue. However, it just wasn't enough to calm him down completely. He needed to do things that were active, to help with the restlessness. Distractions were what were keeping him going. "Seriously, El. Give me some time. I promise in a month or two, I'll be back to normal. Everything is going to be alright."

"Promise?" She asked with a sigh. He thought for a moment.

"Yeah." He sighed, then walked to her, taking her face in his hands and tilting it up towards him. He kissed her then, softly at first, then a little harder. Eleven just sank into it, enjoying the feeling of him and the tenderness of his touch. "I love you, El. No matter what, I'm not going anywhere. I'm not... throwing in the towel or giving up, and I'll never, ever leave you. Does that make you feel better?"

"Yes," she nodded. "I love you, Mike."

"I know," he smiled a little, and for some reason, hearing her say that and looking down into her eyes to see the sincerity did make him feel a little better, because he knew, if all else failed, he would always have Eleven. "Promise me you'll stop worrying so much." She nodded.

"I promise."

---

Sorry it's a bit of a filler chapter :( I like to try and balance the story and the smut lol so there will be smut next chapter again :) it is the only way she knows how to take his mind off things ;) Again, sorry for the wait, and things should be easier now that Archie is settled in. Thanks for reading! Can't wait for the next chapter!

## 7. Chapter 7

Chapter 7:

Eleven had only figured out one way to help Mike, and she needed to utilize it soon. Instead of getting better, he seemed to only remain the same. Some days were worse than others, but for the most part, Mike just wasn't very happy anymore. He smiled sometimes, and he told Eleven he loved her just as often as she would have liked him to.

He tried to pretend he was okay, but everyone could see through it. Finally, she had a window. Jesse left to visit some relative for the weekend. For the first time in awhile, they had the house to themselves for an extensive period of time.

She waited until the right moment. Mike had come home from work and was in the shower. She didn't bother knocking that particular evening, but instead decided to walk right into the bathroom. She started to undress quietly.

"El, is that you?" MIke asked from behind the shower curtain.

"Yes," she answered, though she didn't say anything more. She slid out of her jeans, then pulled her shirt over her head.

"You need something?" Mike asked, and only seconds later, Eleven pulled back the shower curtain. He stared at her for a moment, his eyes scanning her bare body momentarily before lifting his gaze back to her face. "You need to shower?"

"No," she shook her head. Eleven put her hands on his shoulders and stepped into the tub. The curtain closed behind her, though she didn't touch it. She pushed until he was leaning back against the wall then sank to her knees.

"El, wait," he said a little breathlessly. He opened his mouth to say something more, but his words caught in his throat as she took his stiffening member in her hand and squeezed slightly. A sigh slipped past his lips, and his head tilted back against the cold tile wall of the shower. "Eleven..."

She leaned forward and ran the tip of her tongue from the base to the tip of Mike, drawing a gasp from him. Then, she took him in her mouth, inch by inch, until she reached the limit of her capabilities. He squirmed against the wall for a moment, then his hand found its way into her hair, tangling the strands in his fingers.

She moved her mouth in a rhythm, using her squeeze him now, her hands resting against his upper thighs. He groaned softly, his eyes closed and his lips slightly parted to allow shallow, ragged breaths to escape. His mind was clear for the moment, as she knew it would be. All he could focus on was the sweet heat he felt as he rubbed against her lips and tongue.

"El, you don't have to," he said after a few minutes of pleasure. He opened his eyes to look down at her, and she looked back up. "I'll be alright."

"Quiet," she said, finally pulling back from him. She rubbed rapidly with her hand for a moment before standing slowly, trailing kisses up his stomach and chest. She summoned all the bravery she had, and all of the things she learned, ready to make him forget everything but her for a little while.

Eleven took his hands in hers, intertwining their fingers and lifting her hands to pin his back against the tile side of his head. She kissed him, softly at first, then a little harder and a little rougher. Mike's head was spinning. He felt completely out of control, but it oddly turned him on more than anything. She was being so bold and adventurous.

The hot water ran down her back as she climbed him, using the wall and her powers to support her weight. She dropped her hands from his, though they stayed pinned. He tried to pull them from the wall, but they wouldn't budge. His eyebrows furrowed as he noticed the blood slipping from her nostril, but she seemed unphased. Mike chose not to fight it. It felt too good anyways.

Holding onto his shoulders now, she lifted herself until she could slide down and slip his hard member into her eager core. It slid in easily thanks to the water showering over them, and she dropped down until she took in every single inch of him. One leg was

wrapped around his waist, and the other was planted on the bottom of the tub to support her body weight as she mounted him.

She started to move up and down then, once her body adjusted to his size. He tugged once again at his hands, desperate to grab her and take control. However, she kept his wrists pinned, which caused him to whimper slightly in desperation.

"El, please...," he begged softly.

"What?"

"Let it," he panted as she continued moving her hips. "Let me make you feel good."

"No." That was it. Eleven had always been a woman of little words, but it seemed her lack of elaboration was more intended than usual. She was doing it to torture him, and part of Mike loved it.

Eleven finally brought his wrists from the wall, but only so she could grab him and drag him down to the bottom of the tub. She sat on his hips, rubbing her sensitive center against his stiff manhood for a few moments, just enjoying the way it felt. Then, she lifted her hips and let him slip into her again, stretching her until it all fit again.

"Fuck, El," he moaned softly, and he used the freedom of his hands to grab her hips. Eleven didn't just bounce on him, no, she was grinding her hips against his. They rolled and bucked with him inside of her, causing him to moan and groan over and over again. She found the rhythm and motions that cause the biggest reaction, then repeated it consistently.

Just when it felt like he was ready to explode, she moved down away from him. Mike was about to let out a whine of protest until her lips took over again. Eleven ignored the water rushing down her cheeks as she sucked and licked Mike as rapidly as she could. Finally, after a few more minutes of work with her mouth, Mike couldn't take anymore.

One hand gripped the edge of the tub, and the other buried itself in her hair. His whole body tensed, and he let out one last long groan.

Eleven was a little surprised by the sudden burst of a salty liquid down her throat, but she welcomed it quickly, letting it all run down until her mouth was clean again. She sat back, smiling at him with a look of pride in her eyes.

"Fuck, El, you're getting too good at that," he chuckled, still trying to catch his breath as he finished riding out his orgasm. Eleven stood, then turned towards the water, swallowing some to wash down what she forced out of Mike. Mike stood up behind her, wrapping his arms around. "You're not done yet, are you?" He asked, and she could practically hear the smirk on his lips.

"Yes."

"No, I have to take care of you," he said, resting his chin on her shoulder. He reached down from behind her, sliding two fingers into her still heated core. She let out a sigh, then let her head fall back against him. "You want it. I could tell. You want to cum, too."

"What?"

"That's what it's called, El." Mike began pumping his fingers in and out. "That feeling that builds in your gut, then explodes inside of you. The orgasm you reach when you've hit your limit. What you just made me do."

"Oh...." she was panting now, her palms flat against the wall in front of her to steady herself. Her knees were wobbling slightly from the rapid movement of his fingers. His thumb found its way to her clit, rubbing in small circles as his middle and ring finger continued to work their magic. The overwhelming sensations were pushing her to the edge already.

"It must feel good. You're already tightening up," he whispered in her ear, speeding the pace of his fingers as fast as he could, using his thumb to rub back and forth with the movement of his hand. Her knees shook, and her breaths turned to moans. "Go ahead, El. Cum for me."

"Mike!" She gasped loudly as he hit the perfect spot repeatedly. Mere seconds later, she reached her limits. Eleven whimpered his name,

then leaned forward against the wall as her legs felt like they were going to give out. Mike held his hand there, despite her body trying to push him out. He only pulled away when her muscles relax and her pants started to slow.

"Better?" He asked. Eleven turned to face him, a smile on her face. He couldn't help but smile back, it was so damn contagious. She nodded,

"Much better."

"Good," he laughed a little, brushing her wet hair from her face to plant a soft kiss on her forehead. "That was amazing. Maybe we should go for a round two."

"Again?"

"If you can handle it," he challenged with a smirk. She shot one back, one equally mischievous.

"The bed," she said, stepping out of the shower. "When you're done." She grabbed a towel, then trotted off. Mike grinned to himself, then took his bottom lip between his teeth. He closed his eyes and leaned his head back against the wall, content for the moment, and excited about what new things he would experience with Eleven when he got into that bedroom.

## 8. Chapter 8

As requested! Part two of the Eleven and Mike smut lol there won't be smut next chapter as it will return to the story for awhile so I hope you guys enjoy this! Sorry for being so busy! i swear I always try to get to the story as fast as possible but college and work are kicking my ass. So I apologize for the waits! I'll try my best to do better :) Enjoy!

---

### Chapter 8: Round Two

Eleven let out a soft gasp as her back hit the bed, though she had little time to inhale again before Mike came crashing down onto her, his lips melding against hers, stealing all of the air from her lungs. They moved in sync, her hands buried in his hair on the back of his neck and his pressing into the mattress underneath her. Everything about them seemed to fit so perfectly together in that moment, like they were two puzzle pieces that belonged only to each other.

She winced a little as his finger slid into her. Mike paused for a moment, leaning back to look her in the eyes. It seemed she was still a little sore from the shower activities, so he moved slow to let her readjust to having something inside of her again.

"It's okay," he said softly, keeping his eyes locked onto hers. "I'll be gentle, El, don't worry." He slowed the pace of his finger, using it instead to tease and toy with her. It was better for her that way, to start off with. That was the one bad thing about going in hard and rough in the beginning. Her body could only take so much before it needed some rest and relaxation. He planned to stay home the next day, and just lay around all day with her. That would be nice. Hopper wouldn't mind him missing a day of work.

She was started to get back into it, and her body started to react all over again. Mike could feel her getting wetter by the second, which only spurred him on. He added another finger to the mix, helping to stretch her out a bit so he didn't hurt her when he slid back inside.

"M-Mike," she panted breathlessly, her chest heaving rapidly as desire

began to take control of her again. It was so easy with Mike, and she wondered if it was like this for everyone or if they were something special, something different. It felt different than what she knew relationships to be like, but her experience was limited to her and Mike and Johnathan and Nancy. Steve and Nancy, too, but only a little back when she was younger.

Eleven gripped him by the shoulders, then opened her eyes to silently encourage him to keep going, more and more, until they were both too sore and too tired to keep going. Mike leaned down to kiss her again, quickly, before positioning himself between her thighs.

"Tell me if need to stop," he told her, pushing in slowly, inch by inch, in an effort to keep from causing her pain. Her head tilted back, and her eyes closed again. She took her bottom lip between her teeth and bit back a moan, though she didn't really have to. They finally had the house to themselves, which might account for the suddenly insatiable desire to make the best of it.

"Don't stop," she sighed, her body relaxing again after a moment. Eleven wrapped her arms around his neck, bringing him down to her so she could kiss him again. She loved the way his mouth felt on hers, and the way his lips worked hers with such ease and skill. Eleven had never kissed anyone else before, but somehow, she still knew that Mike was just really good at it.

He started with the rhythm of his hips, looking down as they moved to make sure he controlled how fast his thrusts were. He wanted to start slow, even though it seemed the only thing she felt was pleasure. He was struggling, though in all honesty. Her whole body had tightened up since their first moment of intimacy, and he was having to break through her barriers all over again. Each time he pushed in, her body tried to push him back out. Thought it was slightly more difficult than the first time, it really felt all that much more amazing.

"El," he breathed her name, like it was his life force, the only thing keeping him from suffocating in that moment. He thought about how much they'd grown up, in that moment. It didn't seem all that long ago, now that she was here, that they were just kids falling in love, kids that didn't even know what that meant. In the time she was

gone, Mike matured and aged so rapidly, it seemed. Then, when she returned to him, he felt like that kid falling in love again. All of those feelings still existed, fresh in his mind like they never went away.

Making love to Eleven was a feeling that Mike had never known before. He'd been with Cathy several times, and not one of them, even when he thought he really loved her, none of them felt like it did with El. He wasn't a man that believed in fate or soul mates, not really, but with Eleven, he felt like a solid case could be made for the both of them. If he was going to have a predetermined destiny, he was glad it involved Eleven.

He grabbed her legs, his hands under the crooks of her knees, then pushed them up further so he could push deeper. She let out a long moan, loud and free, squirming slightly at the new feeling.

"Mike," she whined, arms tightening around his neck, holding him down against her chest. "Gentle. Be gentle." He slowed his thrusts again, but he didn't let her legs down, didn't stop pushing in as deep as he could though, though he knew that what was causing her the slight discomfort she was talking about. It felt so good, he couldn't bring himself to stop. He was rapidly approaching his end, and if he let up, it would vanish. It was the perfect position, the perfect speed. Mike let himself be a little selfish in that moment.

"I'm almost there," he panted against her ear, quickening his hips just slightly, just enough to help him towards that edge. "It feels so good, El. I don't have to stop."

"Don't stop," she told him again. "Keep going."

"I can't for much longer," he told her honestly, pushing her legs a little further but not far enough to cause her pain. He sucked in a deep breath, pushing and pushing until he neared his climax. "Fuck," he groaned lowly, sliding out from her. He sat back on his knees, but Eleven didn't let that moment go to waste. She sat up with him, lowering herself to take him in her mouth. "El, no," he cried out as he became overwhelmed with pleasure again. His body couldn't hold back and he didn't want it to.

Mike buried his fingers in her hair and pushed as far back in her

throat as he could without choking her. He felt the explosion ripple through him, causing him to jerk and convulse. Eleven didn't pull away, or seem frightened at all. She took it all with ease, letting it flow down the back of her throat. Mike fell over onto the bed, breathing heavily and shaking slightly with residual pleasure.

"Damn it, El. I wanted to hold out longer."

"Sore," she admitted. "Better this way." She laid down beside him, taking his hand in hers and curling her fingers around his. "I need rest." He looked at her, a small smile tugging at his lips, and he nodded.

"Rest. Both of us." He snaked his arms around her, drawing her closer to his body. Eleven curled against him, and he welcomed her into that spot, that place where the two puzzle pieces fit so easily together. He closed his eyes, letting himself rest as the aftershocks ended gradually. Her body was warm from the intimacy, and he was glad of it. Despite her body heat, they pulled the blanket up over themselves and let themselves drift off to sleep.

## **9. Chapter 9**

**Hey guys! I know this wait was longer than usual, and I'm so very sorry! I got hired on as a cleaner this past weekend, when I planned to update lol, and I didn't think it'd be too much work. HOWEVER. Her house was huge and glorious, and I spent 7 hours cleaning on Saturday and 9 hours cleaning on Sunday. Needless to say, I was dead when I finally got home. So I'm sorry I'm late with the update, but there was no way I could have this weekend XD I hope you guys forgive me... AND ENJOY THIS CHAPTER :D**

---

### **Chapter 9:**

Eleven's tactic had worked better than she expected. Her body kept his mind busy, and they spent an awful lot of time rolling around in the bed together. The entire time Jesse was gone, the intimacy never seemed to relent, and by the end of it, they were both exhausted and a little sore. It didn't matter, however, since Mike seemed to be slowly but surely returning to his old self. It was great, and Eleven was thrilled to have Mike back.

Mike still felt guilty over the things he had done, but that feeling of heaviness in his gut was going away little by little each day. Eleven was his savior, of course, driving back the pain and suffering he endured from the memories of what took place in that lab. With each smile, each little feathery kiss on his lips, she brought life back into him, and reignited the passion he had for living, and for loving her.

Finally, Jesse returned, and Mike welcomed him happily. The change in Mike was evident as soon as Jesse came through the door, and it was a welcome change. Jesse smiled at his acquaintance, then said,

"It's good to see you back to your old self again."

"Well, there's a lot of life left to live. I have to get over it at some point, right?" Mike shrugged. Jesse glanced back over Mike's shoulder at Eleven, who was watching them from over the back of the couch. He set his suitcase down near the door.

"I'm not staying very long," Jesse told them. "I visited some family, and my older cousin, Ben, wants me to move in with him. It's a little ways out, so I won't see you guys around as often as before. I'm moving out this weekend, if that's okay."

"It's good for you," Mike told him, patting him on the shoulder briefly. "You're always welcome here, but I'm sure you'll have more space and support with your family. I hope it all works out for you, Jesse." They had come so far from when they first met. Having your life put in danger and having to rely on each other drove them together, and they were both the better for it. Jesse owed Mike everything, though Mike expected nothing.

"Thanks, Mike. It was a long drive, so I think I'm going to shower, then head to bed."

"Goodnight," Eleven called from the couch, and Mike echoed her sentiment.

"Goodnight, guys," Jesse said back to them, then disappeared down the hallway.

Mike looked over at where Eleven was laying on the sofa, then walked over to join her. She moved forward to let him slip behind her, so he could wrap his arms around her waist and draw her closer, which was her favorite way to snuggle up with him. She enjoyed being the little spoon.

"Guess we'll finally have the house to ourselves again," Mike muttered in her ear.

"Mhm," she hummed, a smile on her face. It was certainly much easier for Mike and Eleven to be intimate when Jesse wasn't around. By the weekend, she knew her body would have recovered, and she could continue making sure that Mike stayed happy, however she had to.

---

Nancy laid on her side, letting her fingertips ghost over the skin on her stomach over and over again, wondering if the growing baby inside could feel her touch, or could sense her love. With Johnathan

finally home, they had begun looking for a place of their own. He laid beside her, sifting through a newspaper he took from his mom's nightstand to see if there was anything available.

"What about this," he said suddenly, bringing Nancy's gaze up to him. He folded the paper in half, then lowered it to her field of vision, pointing with his thumb where he gripped the paper. "It's two bedrooms and one bath for four hundred a month. It's a little more expensive than the other one, but it's near Mike, and near an elementary school. It's small, but I could afford it. We can use the spare room as a nursery."

"Sounds good to me," she smiled at him, loving how excited he was about it. "You sure your ready to leave this little nest of yours? Whatever will you do without your mother to do your laundry."

"Hey," he huffed playfully, "I know how to do my own laundry. What about you? What will you do without another girl in the house to watch cheesy romance movies with?" He shot back at her with a sly grin.

"I guess you'll have to suffer through them with me," she giggled a little. She sighed, then stayed quiet for a minute. "Do you really think we can afford it?" She wouldn't be able to work until a few weeks after the baby was born, and even then, they'd have to have Will look after him. She would want to pay him a little, if she could, for his trouble.

"I can," Johnathan nodded. "I wanted it to be a surprise, but I sent in some of my photos to a place nearby, like... thirty minutes outside of Hawkins. They're a big photography business, and they loved them. They want to hire me, Nance. I'm going to take the job. It's twenty more for each set of photos than what I'm getting now. That's a good deal."

"Wow, I'm so proud of you," she beamed, reaching up to run her hand through his hair. She'd never felt like more of an adult. Things were turning around for her, and with a baby on the way, she had to grow up an awful lot. Her childhood had ended long ago, but for some reason, she hadn't felt the loss up until this point. Even though she would miss the days when they were falling in love, little by little,

hunting monsters and defending their siblings, she knew that this new life, with him, would be just as wonderful and full of adventure.

"Nancy, let's get married," Johnathan said suddenly. Her eyes fluttered for a minute, then widened. She knew that it was something they had mentioned before, and that they both wanted. But to hear him say it so matter of factly was a little exciting. "Next month. We'll pull it all together. I know you wanted a nice little ceremony."

"Are you sure?"

"I've always been sure about how I felt about you," he reassured her. "I want to marry you. Our baby should have a married mother and father. So he knows that we're committed to each other."

"He, hm?" she grinned at him. "You so sure it's a boy?"

"I have a feeling," he shrugged. "Have you thought of a name?"

"Hm, well, if it's a boy," she hummed, thinking for a moment, "I think I like the names Thomas and Luke. I'd call him Tommy. It'd be cute."

"What about for a girl?"

"Ella or Ellen," Nancy smiled. "Because Eleven changed our lives, and I want her to be the godmother. Unless she becomes her aunt first." She ran her hand over her stomach again, which was only barely starting to show a bump now. Johnathan laid his hand over hers, brushing his thumb against the bare skin of her abdomen. "What do you think?"

"I like them all. Can the boy's middle name be Will?"

Nancy nodded, "Of course."

---

Dustin sat up from his bed, glancing down at where Lucas was sleeping on his floor. Quietly, he pushed off his blankets, then headed for the bathroom. It was dark, so he used the wall to guide him there. Once he reached it, he flicked on a light. Just before he could start doing what he went in there to do, there was the sudden sound of shattering glass that startled him awake. Dustin hesitated for a

moment, then left the bathroom.

"Lucas?" He called out nervously. There was no answer, so Dustin walked back into the bedroom, only to find Lucas there on the floor, still sleeping. His eyebrows furrowed in concern, then he grabbed the bat by his bed. Slowly, he moved down the hallway, towards the living room where he heard the shattering. He kept his back to the wall, then rounded the corner.

Almost as soon as he stepped foot into the living room, a gunshot assaulted his ears, and he stepped back. Someone was attacking him, in his own house, and he had only one guess. The men from the lab, the ones that lived, they were trying to tie up loose ends, as well as avenge their dead comrades. Could he really blame them, perhaps not. They were a government run program and couldn't have escapees blabbering about what they had been through to any local authorities. Hopper and all the others were probably targets, too.

No sooner than when he realized who was shooting, did he feel a sharp pain shoot through the entire left side of his body. Dustin let out a grunt, then looked down at his side. Blood was seeping through his tee shirt, causing the fabric to stick to him uncomfortably. He had been shot, for the first time in his life, and it hurt so badly.

"Lucas!" He cried out. More gunshots started to ring through his ears, and he could see and hear the bullets colliding with the walls in front of him. "Lucas!"

## 10. Chapter 10

### Chapter 10:

Mike rushed down the cool, sterile smelling hallways of the hospital, dragging Eleven along behind him by her hand. He couldn't get there fast enough, and she found herself struggling to keep up with him at the pace he was moving.

His lips outlined the number of each room as he read them, searching for one in particular that was the one with his friends inside of it. Finally, he reached the number he was searching for. He hadn't gotten a lot of information about what happened, so he paused outside the door, a little nervous about what he might find on the other side of the door.

"It's okay," Eleven told him softly with a squeeze of her hand. "Go in." Mike nodded at her over his shoulder, then with a deep breath, pushed through the door.

Lucas was sitting by the window, his arm in a sling, but otherwise intact. Dustin lay in the bed, eyes closed and body still except for the slow rising and falling of his chest. There were tubes in each nostril, and a mass of plastic around his mouth.

The room was silent aside from the heartbeat monitor steadily beeping away. When Mike let out a sigh, disturbing the silence, Lucas turned away from the window to face him. Eleven's eyebrows furrowed, and she couldn't help but blame herself. She was, after all, the primary target of the government agency running the lab.

"What happened?" Mike finally asked, desperate to get all of the details. He couldn't do anything if he didn't know what happened, and he certainly wasn't going to stand around and watch his friends be hospitalized or worse.

"They shot through the windows," Lucas explained, standing slowly. "The bastards from the lab attacked the house. Dustin was hit, then he called for me. I went out for him, and they caught me in the shoulder, but I managed to drag him to the bathroom where there

aint any windows. Then i went to the phone in his bedroom. I called the station."

"Is he... going to be okay?" Eleven asked, her voice nearly a squeak as she stared at the still mass on the bed that she was so m used to being full of life.

"Doc says he'll live. Got some internal damage, and his body is under severe stress trying to function properly. Or something like that... it was hard to pay attention. They put him under fir his own safety. When they get him back to normal, theyll bring him out of it."

"How long will it take?" Mike questioned further, stepping up to the edge of the bed that Dustin was laying on. Lucas shrugged.

"I think he said a few days minimum. Maybe a week if hes unlucky."

"He'll be out soon," Mike said with a half-hearted smile. "He's always been a prett tough son of a bitch. He wont stay down for very long."

"I think its best we all stay down," Lucas said honestly. "The more we fight back, the worse it gets. We're a mess that they are trying to clean up. Hopper says we should move. Or go into hiding. Something that will make us safer."

"We have family here. I live and work here. I cant move."

"I can," Lucas frowned. "I dont want to. Once he's better, me and Dustin... we're going back to school. Getting a place close to the college. Stay together and lay low. Hawkins is dangerous now, Mike. Too dangerous. We're not soldiers."

"There has to be something we can do," Mike sighed deeply, the fear of losing everyone he loved weighing heavily on his chest. "There has to be some way to make us safe. All of us and our families. There has to be."

"I dont think there is, Mike."

"We'll find a way! Wont we, El?!" When Mike turned around to get a response from her, he noticed that Eleven was no longer there. "El?!" He called out, racing out into the hall after her. She was a little ways

down, walking with her arms around her upper body. "Eleven, wait," he said, jogging after her, dodging nurses and visitors along the way. He reached her side, finally.

"El, stop," he told her, taking her by the shoulders. When he turned her around and looked her in the eye, he realized she was crying. "El?" He put a hand on her cheek, wiping at the tears with his thumb. "Eleven, what is it?"

"My fault," she sniffed, turning her gaze away from him in shame. "My fault. I will fix it."

"Fix it? What do you mean fix it?"

"Fix it," she answered plainly. "I have to."

"How?"

"Trust me," she said, leaning in to kiss him quickly. "I have to go." She pulled away and started to hurry down the hall. Mike stood, confused and dumbfounded for a moment, a million thoughts swirling like a flurry around in his mind. When his feet finally took over for him, a punch of papers flew from the counter near him, spilling out on the floor by his feet.

"Excuse me," the nurse behind the counter grimaced, getting up to go after the papers. Mike quickly scrambled to gather them up for her, but when he looked up, all he saw was Eleven disappear around the corner, a spot of blood under her nose.

---

Nancy sat on the bed, her back against a pillow, and her hands resting on the mattress underneath her, holding her body upright. She watched Johnathan pace the room, his eyebrows furrowed and a serious expression on his face.

They had heard the news about Dustin and Lucas, and it put a bit of a hold on their plans to move out. Johnathan became afraid to be separated, afraid that someone may come after Nancy while he's at work, or Will and his mom while they're at their new place. A million and one worries sent him into a bit of a thinking frenzy.

"I just dont... want to leave anyone alone," he said after a few minutes, pausing his pacing to reach up and pinch the bridge of his nose in frustration. "I never want anyone to be alone. Its safer to be together. Maybe even to board up the windows."

"Or just buy new shutters and keep them closed. Ill take money out of savings."

"But," he frowned at her, "that money is for us to move out. I know how badly you want us to be on our own, Nance. I dont want to do that to you."

"We have to protect each other. All of us. Its worth it to be safe. We have a growing family to look after." Her hands instinctively reached for her stomach. "If we have to postpone moving out, i understand, Johnathan. I wont be mad."

"You are..." he sat on the bed beside her and laid his hand over hers gently, "amazing." She shook her head at that, smiling and blushing a bit. "You are," he argued with a chuckle. "You really are, Nancy. I cant wait to be married. We'll do it soon. I promise."

"Lets take it a step at a time. Our safety comes first."

"Of course," he agreed. "But as soon as we take care of it, Im going to make you Mrs. Nancy Beyers." She grinned a little.

"Has a nice ring to it."

"So will your finger."

"I love you," she sighed, reaching up to touch her face, to feel his warm cheek against her palm. "I really love you. Please be careful from now on. Okay? Just... be careful." There was nothing she feared more these days than losing Johnathan or her baby. She wouldnt be able to stand it. Finally, she reached a point in her life when she was happy, and she had what she wanted. It would kill her to lose it. Any of it.

"Ill be extra careful," he promised. "Just for you." He kissed her forehead, then let her curl up agaisnt him, laying with her on the bed. In that moment, cuddling up with him, Nancy felt like it was

going to be okay. She believed him.

---

Eleven knew that the only way to solve anything was to face it head on. She had to face the people that were destroy her and the ones she loved. They wouldnt stop, so she was going to have to make them stop. She knew it. She knew what was to come.

She walked slowly, calmly, down the streets of Hawkins, her brown waves fluttering around her with every breeze. It was a long walk to the lab, and she couldnt slow down. There wasnt any time to be wasted, and she knew that. Lives were at stake, because of her. All of it was because of her.

Sucking in a deep breath, she pushed on, being careful not to get in anyones way or draw attention to herself. There was work to be done, things she had to do. She couldnt afford to be slowed down. Not when Mike was at risk, when everyone was at risk.

She turned off into the woods as soon as she got a chance, feeling more comfortable there as she walked. Her senses were on high alert, listening and looking to make sure nothing was able to sneak her. Eleven was nervous, and as she got closer to the lab, she started to shake. Her life was at risk now, but dying didnt scare her. Failing, and causing the death of others, is what was shaking her to her very core.

## 11. Chapter 11

Chapter 11:

Mike had gone home first to see if by some miracle, Eleven ended up there. He hoped to walk in and see her sitting there at the kitchen table, eating a half frozen egg because she was never patient enough to let it cook all the way before she ate it.

But she wasn't there. The house was empty and quiet. He let out a disappointed sigh, then leaned back against the front door, letting his head fall back and thud against it. He was formulating a plan in his head when he heard the phone ring.

Mike rushed to it, fearful of what news might be waiting for him on the other end of the line. When he put the phone to his ear, it was Hopper's voice on the other end of the line.

"Kid?"

"I'm here," Mike said, nervously awaiting for whatever Hopper called to tell him. "What's going on, Hop? Did something else happen?" Hopper let out a heavy sigh.

"I don't know. She won't tell me anything." She, Mike wondered, his eyebrows furrowing in concern. He must have meant Eleven, but what did he mean. "Just come get her. A deputy found her on the side of the road, covered in blood. She won't speak."

"Eleven?"

"Yeah, who else would I be calling you about?"

"I'll be right there," Mike told him anxiously. "Don't let anyone near her. Keep her away from your idiot deputies." Mike slammed the phone down, then went running back towards the door. The phone rang again, and with a frustrated groan, Mike went back to answer it again.

"What?"

"Mike," came Eleven's voice, soft and scratchy. "I'm bleeding."

"What? Why are you bleeding?" Mike asked her, sitting on the edge of the bed and clinging to the phone in his hand. "Eleven?" There was silence, followed by quiet sobbing. "Eleven!" There was a thud, then nothing. "El! El, where did you go?"

"Kid, you need to head to the hospital. I'm taking Eleven there now." The phone clicked, and Mike wasted no time heading for that door. He burst through it, not locking it behind him, then sprinted to his car. Breathing heavily, he pulled out of the driveway and sped off down the road.

---

For the second time that day, Mike rushed down the cold hallway of the Hawkins Emergency Hospital. It wasn't a large place, and he found the room number he was given pretty quickly. Hopper was standing outside, looking exhausted and worried.

"Hop, what happened to her?" Mike asked, frantic and panicked, the worst possible things running through his mind. "Why was she bleeding?"

"Go in and see her, son. Let her tell you." Hopper pushed off the wall, then put a hand on Mike's shoulder to offer a little bit of comfort. "Everything is going to be alright, kid. I'm going to clean up my town, so just stay with her and don't let her do anything stupid." All Mike could do was nod. He hadn't been paying much attention to what Hopper said in that moment. He was too worried about Eleven.

Hopper patted his shoulder once more, then started off down the hallway. Mike went into the room, finding Eleven laying there in the bed, her hand over her stomach. She was looking straight up at the ceiling above her, expression blank and unwavering. She didn't even look at Mike when he walked in. Her gaze remained fixed on the ceiling.

"El?" Mike said softly, sitting in the chair beside her bed. "El, what happened?" Her eyes closed, then, and Mike was pained to see tears slide down her cheeks and hit the pillow underneath her head. He reached up to wipe them away. "Tell me."

"I'm broken," she said after a brief silence. Mike looked at her for a moment, then shook his head.

"What? What do you mean?" He asked her. There was no answer, not at first. "Eleven, why do you think you're broken?"

"There was a baby," she finally spoke, rubbing her hand over her stomach. "I killed it." He didn't understand. He couldn't understand because she didn't understand. Mike shook his head, then stood up.

"El, I'll be right back, okay?" She just nodded, opening her eyes to stare back at the ceiling. It bothered him immensely that she wouldn't look at him, but he didn't push her. Mike stepped outside, catching the closest nurse. "Excuse me, can you tell me what happened to my girlfriend?" He asked, pointing back towards her room.

"She sustained an injury to her thigh. It was a bullet wound, we think. The stress of it caused her to miscarry, I think. I'm very sorry, sir."

"Miscarry? She wasn't... she wasn't pregnant." Mike stared at the nurse, eyes wide and horrified. The woman looked down at the clipboard in her hand, then lifted the top paper to read the one underneath.

"No, she was pregnant. The doctor ran some tests. According to this, the doctor doesn't think the miscarriage was caused by the wound. It looks like it's a chromosomal issue. For some reason, her eggs will never be able to develop properly. He recommends a permanent contraceptive." She looked back up at him. "Didn't... he tell you all of this already?"

"No," he shook his head. "I wasn't... here." She gave an apologetic expression, then went scurrying down the hall. It was so much happening at once, and Mike's head was starting to spin. He went back into Eleven's room and took a seat beside her bed. He reached for her hand, taking it between his and holding it tightly.

"Do you understand what the doctor told you?" Mike asked her gently, rubbing his thumbs over her hand. "Does it make sense to

you?"

"I killed it, Mike." Most of it didn't make sense to her, but she understood that it was there, then it dies. It died because of something that was wrong with her. "I'm sorry, Mike. I'm sorry."

"No, no, no, El, don't be sorry. You dont need to be sorry." He squeezed her hand tighter when he saw the tears start to fall again. "It's not your fault. The lab did this to you. All those tests and experiments on you caused this. It's not anything you did." He glanced down. "Can I see your leg?" Eleven pulled the blanket off of her right thigh to show him where it was bandaged.

"I went to the lab. I killed people. They hit me." She covered it up again, not even slightly concerned with it at the moment. It didn't hurt after the doctor gave her medicine for it. The pain went away like he promised it would. "Mike, I'm sorry."

"I said it's not your fault, El." He laid his head down on her hand, kissing it quickly. "I was so worried, El. I'm so glad you're okay."

"But the baby..."

"No, there wasn't a baby. It wasn't a real baby yet, so you didn't kill anything, Eleven. You didn't do anything." He wasnt sure what else to say. Eleven hardly understood pregnancy, and yet she felt some kind of loss when she learned that had been a baby in her womb for a brief period of time. "What's important is that you're okay. That you're still here with me."

"You aren't safe with me."

"I'm not safe without you," he corrected her immediately. "Eleven, I lost you for seven years. I never got over it, not really. How could I? It would destroy me to lose you again, after everything we've been through together. All the time we've spent together. You cant leave me again."

"What do we do?"

"We figure this out. We help Hopper figure this out. We can do it, Eleven. I will do it." He didn't want her involved anymore. He wanted

her to stay out of it completely. It was impossible not to worry about her. "You need to relax and rest, El. Just rest." Two of the people he loved the most were in the hospital with bullet wounds. Mike had never felt so helpless and out of control as he did right then. He knew he had to figure it all out and do it soon. However, for the moment, he just wanted to stay by Eleven's side and make sure she got better.

Later, he would go visit Dustin, since he was there on the floor just above them. Lucas was probably still there, too. For as long as they were able to stay in the hospital, they were safe. It would buy them some time to look for a more permanent solution. Mike hoped with his entire being that Hopper woild find a way to solve all their problems. Hopper had to clean the town, then it'd all be over. They could all go home, and no one would ever be hurt again.

## 12. Chapter 12

Hey guys! Sorry the last chapter was so sad. I probably should've put a warning up, that's my bad. I know Eleven getting pregnant is something that's been asked for an mentioned frequently, so I wanted to address it at some point. I wont mention it much from here on, like it wont be a focal point, but I think I dont want Eleven to get pregnant during the course of this story. Its not something I have much experience with, and Nancy is already preggo lol sooooo yep. I have other ideas though ;) sorry again. Hope you guys still want to stick around.

---

### Chapter 12:

Once Eleven was cleared, she and Mike went together to visit Dustin, who was finally awake. He smiled when they came in, and Lucas was sitting in the window sill with Will at his side. It felt nice to all be together again, as a whole.

"It's good to see you, Dustin," Mike said as he came into the room. He moved to the side of the bed and gave a soft pat to Dustin's arm before sitting near the other boys. Eleven stayed in the wheelchair Mike rolled her in. The wound on her thigh would heal without issue, but it made it hard for her to walk painlessly for a little while.

"Hopper came to visit," Lucas said before Dustin could answer. "He said he pulled some strings, and some federal guys are coming to help hunt down the people from the lab. They no longer work with the government, and they got too many people involved. So... we should be safe pretty soon."

"Next time they come to my house, I'll be ready. I'll learn jujitsu or something," Dustin huffed, a bit of a playful smirk on his face. His smile was contagious, and they all chuckled a bit at his remark. Dustin looked over at Eleven. "How are you?"

"Leg hurts," she told him honestly. He gave her a sympathetic look,

"I'm sorry, El."

"You should rest," Will told her. "Hopper will take care of this. You don't have to come to the rescue anymore." She nodded her response, looking down at her feet for a moment. She'd done something stupid and gotten hurt in the process. Now Mike had to take care of her. She felt bad about it.

"She's the strongest of all of us," Mike said, noticing her expression. "It's okay to come to the rescue as long as it doesn't put your life in danger. You're our X-man, our superhero." She looked up at him, her face lighting up a bit. Mike reached up to run his fingers through her hair, which was still a little short from when Jesse cut it, but honestly Mike found it a little sexy. She looked older, more mature. Like the woman she was becoming.

"Bullets are her weakness, then," Lucas joked, and Eleven laughed a bit at that. Mike was happy to see her in better spirits. She didn't typically understand the severity of things that weren't life or death, and he thanked God for that in their particular situation. "So, looks like it's Wills turn to get shot."

"What?" Will scoffed. "I'm not getting shot. If the bullet didn't kill me, mom would. She'd smack my head and say, 'I almost lost you once, don't go dying on me now,' or something like that. You know how she is. Ever since she got me back from the Upside Down."

"At least your mom knows about all of it. She understands. Our moms are still clueless," Dustin reminded him. Mike nodded. Hopper explained away a lot of things to his mom. Mostly that Brenner and his goons were lying and they were kidnappers or something of the sort. That they ran off as soon as they got their hands on Eleven but that Mike was trying to help her. It was similar to the truth, so Mike's parents bought it.

"How long before they release you?" Mike asked Dustin. He was ready to go home, and thought it would be nice to have everyone together, in one house for awhile. Until they knew they were safe, really and truly safe. "I was thinking you and Lucas could stay with me and El for awhile. Wills house is pretty full. You guys shouldn't be alone."

"Well, Lucas wants to leave."

"No, if Hopper keeps his promise, I'll stay. We'll hold up at your place until we know," Lucas told them. He was unsure about all of it. He never wanted to rush into danger if he didn't have to. Lucas had a deep down fear of death, whether it's his own or his loved one's.

"Like old times when we used to have sleepovers."

"Except Mike's sharing his bed with a girl now," Lucas teased playfully. Mike blushed a little, but Eleven just smiled. She didn't get embarrassed about those things. In fact, she just spill the details of their intimate moments if it didn't embarrass Mike.

---

Once home, Mike helped Eleven off of her temporary crutches and onto the bed. He put a pillow under her leg and went to turn on the little TV in the corner. It was nice to be home again, with Eleven, able to relax and wind down for the first time in awhile.

"How's your leg?"

"Okay," she told him with a slight shrug. Mike dared not bring up anything else in that moment. She was finally feeling good. He was sure the medicine the doctor sent home with them was helping with that as well. "I'm sorry I scared you."

"Don't worry about it. I'm just glad you're okay." She nodded back to him. Mike slid out of his shirt, then crawled into the bed beside her, reaching over to slide his arm under her and draw her closer, planting a soft kiss on her forehead. "Let's just take it easy for awhile."

"Mike, what is married?" She asked suddenly. She had heard it mentioned with Johnathan and Nancy. Will said something about them getting married, and she didn't really understand what it meant.

"Uh. Its something two people do together when they decide they want to be together forever." It was a terrible explanation but Mike was never great at them.

"Are we married?"

"No, its a legal thing. You have to do it in a church."

"Why?"

"It's just tradition I guess. People get dressed up and say vows in a church and they sign some papers and they're married."

"But why?"

"I dont know. Its just a way to show you're really committed. You cant just stop being married. So its a way of proving you're in it for the long haul, I guess."

"Dress up," Eleven pondered. "In a pretty dress?"

"A very pretty, very expensive dress."

"I want to get married," she said, her smile growing immensely. She liked it, all that time ago, when she got to be dressed up. And she loved Mike, and she wanted to be connected to him forever. She liked the way married sounded.

"Well, Id have to get a ring."

"Why?"

"It's tradition. I wear a ring, and you wear s ring." Mike lifted her hand, grabbing the tip of her ring finger and wiggling it playfully, drawing a few giggles from her. "You wear it on this finger, and everyone knows you belong to someone."

"I'm Mike's," she said firmly, as if that was what she'd tell anyone who asked. "All Mike's. Forever." She liked the word forever, especially pertaining to Mike. Forever with Mike seemed like heaven to her. It was what she wanted.

"All mine, forever", Mike repeated. "I'll love you forever." He slid a hand up to her cheek, turning her face towards him so he could kiss her lips, softly, passionately, holding them there until they needed to breathe again. Eleven grinned.

"I'll love you forever." If she understood anything, it was her feelings for Mike. They were clear as day, and eternal. Eleven loved him. She always would. They were meant to be, and it would never change.

Love, she understood through Mike. Love was what gave her life.

## 13. Chapter 13

Chapter 13:

Mike knew that he was still pretty young to be getting married, but his own parents had married very young. It wasn't that weird when he thought about it, but it still felt like something they should wait for. However, Eleven was just so excited about it, he found it hard to say no to her. Either way, he wasn't going to bring it up again unless she mentioned it, so he hoped it would just linger in the back of her mind for now.

Dustin was released from the hospital a week later, and they had a small gathering at Mike's place with all of the old gang. Even Will came, needing a break from his mother gushing over her future grandchild that Nancy was carrying around. Mike didn't really want to talk about it either, since he didn't want to think about his older sister having sex with Will's older brother. It was a little weird.

Lucas brought some drinks with him to have a little bit of extra fun that night, and Mike put in some old movies. For awhile, they sat around watching cheesy horror flicks, which seemed to bother Eleven very little. Perhaps her reality was much more terrifying than watching any movie on a tiny screen. Her face remained stoic throughout the movies, except for when she saw something that interested her.

After the second movie, they ordered pizza and sat around the little dining table together with a deck of cards. It kind of reminded Mike of when they were young and used to play dungeons and dragons in his basement. Part of him wished they had never grown up and out of the things they used to enjoy so much together, but he knew it wasn't a choice to age. Everyone got older, and everyone changed when they got older. Almost everyone. He looked to Eleven. She was as pure and innocent as when he met her, though she looked older, she was pretty much the same on the inside.

"So Hopper seems to think all of this will be over soon," Will noted as they shuffled the deck. "He told my mom that, at least, but maybe he said it just to get her to stop panicking. She thinks our house is going

to get shot up next."

"I fear for the lives of anyone that tries to shoot up your house," Dustin joked. "I can already see your mom walking out with a sawed off shotgun and blowing some heads off." They all chuckled a bit at that, except Mike. The image of it brought back some unpleasant memories.

"She's a real firecracker, that woman," Lucas tsked. "You should've seen her when you were gone. Everyone tried to tell her you were dead, but she never accepted that." They all had a deep respect for both Joyce and Hopper. After everything they all went through together, it was hard not to. They saved Will, and Hopper saved Eleven. Or tried to, at least.

"Yeah, Johnathan told me about it," Will nodded. "Said she was pretty crazy."

"I guess we'll get like that one day. When we have kids," Mike piped up in the conversation. "I mean... Knowing all of the shit we do, and everything that's out there. We'll probably seem crazy and over protective to our kids. It'll be hard to convince them the monsters under their bed aren't real when... when we've seen them." No one laughed at that, but they all nodded in agreement. Eleven looked at the ground, and Mike noticed her solemn expression. Probably not the best idea to bring up kids right now. Not so soon.

"So what're we playing now?" Lucas asked, setting the deck in the center of the table.

"Blackjack?" Dustin suggested.

"Could play go fish. That's pretty easy to teach El," Will said, shooting a smile her way. Eleven nodded, thinking that whatever it was, if it was easy to learn, that's the game she wanted to play. "You just match the cards in your hand, and if you need something, you pick someone to ask. If they don't have what you need to match, they say 'go fish' and you draw a card from the deck."

"I'll help her," Mike said, picking up the deck to start handing cards out. "Me and El can share a deck for the first couple of games." They

all agreed with Mike, and they played a few games like that. Eleven moved over into Mike's lap at one point, curling up there and holding the cards with him right behind her to help her and give advice on what she should ask for or pair up. It was nice, and everyone seemed happy for the first time in awhile. There didn't seem to be anything to fear or fight or worry about in that moment. It was like old times, growing up together, playing games at Mike's and waiting for their curfews.

---

Once Will had taken everyone home, Mike and Eleven retired to the bedroom. Mike had a little buzz from drinking with the guys, and it left a soft, barely noticeable fuzziness in his head that did very little other than relax him. He shed his tee shirt and pants, then slid into bed beside El, relaxing back against the pillow and taking a deep breath.

Eleven moved right up against his side, laying her head there on his shoulder and staring up at the ceiling. Things were quiet lately, and while she was grateful that nothing was going wrong and no one was getting hurt, it made her a little nervous. Those bad men from the lab were never the type to give up. Not once. Not ever. She hoped they weren't planning anything, and that it would just be over finally after all these years.

"What's on your mind?" Mike asked, noticing that she was being quieter than usual. He brushed her hair from her face so he could see her expression better at the angle they were laying together. She shrugged her shoulders and rolled onto her stomach to look him in the eyes.

"Nothing."

"Come on, I know you well enough by now, El," he smiled softly, brushing his thumb along her shoulder. "I know the face you make when you're thinking about something. As cute as it is, sometimes it concerns me. So... what is it?"

"Worried," she admitted with a sigh. "That's it." He understood that feeling, and he knew exactly what she meant. When things got quiet, he got worried, too. The men from the lab and the Demogorgons

were all still out there, and when it was calm, it felt like something was just lurking around the corner, waiting for them.

"Don't worry for now. I trust Hopper. He's taking care of it," Mike told her, though he wasn't sure if he really believed that himself. It was hard to believe it would all just be over, though that's what he wished for everyday. It just didn't seem that easy. "How do I make you feel better?" He asked her with a small grin. She looked up like she was thinking about an answer.

"Kiss me," she finally told him.

"Kiss you? You sure that will work?" He chuckled. Eleven smiled at him and nodded excitedly. "Well, I guess I have no choice, then," he teased, sitting up so he could take her face in his hands and press his lips to hers. He held them there for a long while, hand sliding back to bury itself in her short brown waves. His fingers tangled there. When he went to pull back, Eleven moved closer, kissing him again, harder, her own hands grabbing at his shoulders.

Their tongues danced together to the beautiful rhythm that they seemed to create together each and every time they kissed, something that sparked that feeling between them, that magical romantic dance of every piece and part of them, mind, body and soul. It all seemed to meld together in those melodic moments, like two halves of a whole they had been separated for too long. Now, they would make sure to never be torn apart again.

After a moment, Eleven reached for his boxers, but Mike quickly grabbed her hand to stop her. He sat up, breaking the kiss so he could catch his breath and look her in the eyes. She was confused and a little disappointed that he refused her. Her brow furrowed.

"Mike?"

"I just..." He trailed off with a sigh. "I think you should give your body... time to heal, El. It's a little soon after everything, and I don't want to hurt you." If he was careless with intimacy like he was before, he would only end up ultimately hurting El more, and that was something he definitely didn't want to risk. "I'm going to get Nancy to take you to the doctor and get some medicine that will

help... prevent anymore problems."

"Medicine?"

"Yes, you just take a little pill once a day, and then we don't have to worry about it anymore," he explained. It was better this way. Better for El. He hated how hurt she was when she was laying in that hospital bed, how devastated she looked without even grasping the severity of it all. Nancy agreed to take Eleven to a lady doctor for him, so he was going to wait for that. "I'm sorry, El. Let's wait until after that, okay?"

She frowned, "Okay."

"Come here," He told her, extending his arm to welcome her back to his shoulder, where she had been laying before. Eleven rested her head there, throwing an arm over her bare abdomen and hugging him close to her. She felt like she had done something wrong, and Mike had to fix it for her. It wasn't a good feeling, but she said nothing more about it so they could just get some rest. "Don't worry about anything, El. I'll take care of you. I promised."

"I know," she nodded, hugging him a little tighter. "Goodnight, Mike."

"Goodnight, El."

## 14. Chapter 14

As usual, sorry for the wait :) But ill make it up to you. Heres an entire chapter of explicit smut for those of you who wanted one. If you're not into smut, Ill try to update again as soon as possible! Anyways, leave a review if ya wanna but most importantly, enjoy!

---

### Chapter 14:

Eleven did wait. She waited until Nancy took her to a doctor with a fancy name, and she waited for a whole week after like the doctor told her to. It was becoming tedious, but finally, she was allowed to be intimate with Mike again.

Mike had done his best to keep his distance and remain in control without alienating her. It was difficult for him, too, Eleven could tell. After her week was up, she decided on the day because Mike finally couldnt take it anymore.

He had gone to take a shower right after dinner, which was a little odd. Eleven stacked up the dishes and set them in the sink. She lingered there for a moment, then walked back to the bedroom. At first, all she could hear was the shower running, but as she approached the door, she discovered more than just the water hitting the tub.

Mike was making sounds, though incredibly soft, like pants or short groans. It was only barely audible, but Eleven knew what those sounds meant. She quietly pushed open the door, stepping inside the bathroom. Careful not to make a sound, she slid out of the tee shirt she was in, then pushed down her underwear, stepping out of them.

When Eleven pulled the curtain back, Mike immediately stood upright and dropped his hands to his sides. His cheeks were flush with embarrassment. Eleven didn't care. It was kind of cute the face he made when she exposed him. She said nothing but motioned for him to follow. Then, she left the bathroom altogether.

The room was lit only by the small lamp on the nightstand on Mike's side of the bed. When he came out of the bathroom, towel wrapped around his waist, Eleven was sitting there, by the lamp, completely bare. He took a deep breath.

"El, are you sure?" He asked in an effort to be careful. She simply nodded, then slid back on the bed, laying propped up against a pillow so she could see him, her knees slightly bent and pressed together, closing off the area that Mike craved to be in.

He dropped the towel from his waist, moving across the room and climbing onto the bed with her. Instead of getting right to it, he laid beside her, running his hand up and down her soft thigh gently. It felt like it had been so long, that slight touch was enough to make her shiver. She had been anticipating it for weeks now, and finally, she would be able to feel that sweet release that only Mike could bring to her.

His fingertips trailed around to her inner thigh, moving up slowly, teasingly, until they brushed against her center. Eleven squirmed, a little whimper of desperation escaping her lips. Mike only smiled at the sound, not moving an inch to rush this moment.

The tip of his middle finger rolled that sweet spot, causing her to gasp and jerk a little in response, her legs closing slightly out of instinct. He raised an eyebrow and looked up at her.

"You're so sensitive, aren't you?"

"Yes," she sighed, relaxing into the pillow with her eyes closed.  
"Please, Mike."

"Please, what?"

"I want to..."

"Want to what?" He pushed, knowing she knew exactly what to ask for. He'd said it to her so many times before, so she knew. She understood. Blushing, she finally answered exactly how she knew he wanted her to answer.

"Want to cum."

"I can do that," he smirked down at her, rolling her clit with his fingertip again once more before sliding his hand down to slip two fingers into her. She was already wet and warm, clearly excited by even the smallest touches. It really had been too long.

Eleven moaned softly as he started to pump his fingers in and out of her. Mike watched her face, aroused by her expressions as she sank into the pleasure. Her legs trembled slightly.

After a minute or two of readying her, Mike moved around to slide between her knees. Eleven snaked her arms around him, resting her palms on his muscular back and pulling him closer.

Mike moved slowly, knowing that her body would have to readjust. He pushed in the tip first, but Eleven was impatient. She had waited too long to feel him inside of her. Wrapping her legs around his waist, she used her heels to pulled him down, pushing his entire length into her.

At first, there was the sharp pain that Eleven had known to be something common. Mike was large, and Eleven was small. After all, she had been a virgin until Mike. She didnt understand intimacy in the slightest. It was something Mike taught her, and something she had come to enjoy very very much with him.

It eased quickly, and Eleven loosened her grip on him so he could finally start moving, pumping in and out of her at a steady pace. Eleven panted and whimpered with each thrust of his skilled hips. Everything felt so sensitive, and each touch sent her body alight with pleasure.

Mike knew she wouldnt last long so he moved slowly at first, wanting to draw it out as long as possible to get plenty of pleasure himself. However, Eleven was growing increasingly restless. It was clear she wanted him, all of him, as fast and hard as she always had him.

Mike couldn't refuse her, and her whines of desperation were enough to convince him. He quickened his pace, pushing in deeper each time while simultaneously moving faster. Her head turned to the side and her back arched. Her hands gripped his biceps tightly, nails digging in slightly but Mike didnt care. Each reaction only spurred him on.

He sat back, then grabbed her by her arm and flipped her over onto her stomach. Since she wasn't used to that position, he manually reached down to pull her hips up. When Eleven pushed upright on her arms as well, Mike took her by the shoulder and pressed until she relaxed her torso down into the mattress while keeping her hips up.

"Good girl," he told her, sliding his hand down her back along her spine. "Like this." She gripped handfuls of the sheets as Mike took his position behind her. Each inch of his hard member slid in agonizingly slow. She begged him with soft sounds of displeasure, so he immediately began to pump into her again, as hard and fast as she wanted him to.

"Mi-ike!" She cried out as she rocked back and forth into the bed. She reached out for whatever she could get ahold of, dragging a nearby pillow closer to her and biting down to hold back any more outbursts. It turned him on, admittedly, that she made such a sound in the first place. He didn't slow or soften his movements, ready to just push her over that edge and give her what she had been so desperate for.

Something in him just reacted, and he reached forward to pull her hair back. Eleven was hardly even phased by it, thankfully. She just tilted her head back, the mix of pleasure and pain only pushing her closer to the edge.

"M-mike," she stuttered, panting heavily now. "Dont... dont stop..." Mike held onto that handful of her hair and sped up just a little bit more, just enough to finally drive her into that state of ecstasy she had longed for.

Eleven jerked, her back dipping lower before she sat up to get away from the suddenly overwhelming sensation. Mike held onto her hips, riding out her orgasm with himself buried inside of her entirely. Her body convulsed a few times, then collapsed onto the bed. Mike finally released her, letting himself slip away and flopping down onto his back beside her.

Eleven immediately curled up against his side, and Mike slipped an arm under her to draw her closer. She let out a few long sighs, then leaned up to kiss his cheek.

"Thank you."

"You don't have to thank me," he chuckled. "I enjoyed it, too. A whole lot."

"Really?"

"Really," he promised, returning her kiss with a peck to the top of her head. "I always enjoy making you feel good. And you make me feel good, too." She seemed content with that. She began tracing patterns against his bare chest, and they laid together for awhile.

It was those moments that made Mike feel like the world stood still for a little while. He would forget his worries, forget everything that was going on outside their little apartment. Eleven both made him feel safe, and made him forget he was ever afraid, ever nervous. It was a power only she had, and it eventually lulled him into a soft, comfortable slumber, with her still at his side.

## 15. Chapter 15

Hey guys! You know the drill by ill say it anyways. SO SORRY FOR THE WAIT. Its been a rough week or so and Ive been having problems with not sleeping and migraines but hopefully itll settle soon :) a lot of people have been requesting a certain something, so heres my apology ;) enjoy, you lovely human beings!

---

Chapter 15:

It was nice, having things back to normal. Well, mostly normal. Hopper had kept his word and gotten the local and state police working on hunting down every last man from the lab. Some of them had been jailed already. Since they were too busy hiding from the law, they didnt have time to go after any of the boys or Eleven.

Mike was convinced that things couldnt just be over. It felt like it was way too easy. No there had to be some danger lurking around the corner. He couldnt settle, couldnt let his guard down entirely. If he was going to protect his friends and family, he had to stay alert, stay on his toes. He wouldnt let anyone take Eleven away from him again.

Eleven had let all of the dangers slip her mind for awhile. Her focus was entirely on Mike, on spending time with Mike, and enjoying every bit of his company. She hardly ever left his side, mostly because Mike was all she knew. While she knew the boys, and Wills mom and Hopper, they werent like what Mike was to her. He was home. He was everything.

He had to go back to work, which meant she was stuck at home a lot by herself. Sometimes Mike would have Will come stay with her while he was gone. Theyd watch movies and play cards to pass the time. Will was still sick, and Eleven hated that she couldnt fix it.

After a week, he relaxed enough to leave her at home alone. Unfortunately, that meant that she had no distractions except for the TV. One day, the second week after Mike went back to work, those primal, human urges came to her. Mike wasnt there to help her, or to

get rid of that desire in the pit of her stomach. She wanted to wait, but she grew desperate as more hours that ticked by.

She laid in the bed for a long while, staring up at the ceiling and thinking about how amazing it would be once he got home. He knew all the right spots to hit to drive her crazy. As she thought about it, more and more, it only made the craving worse.

Her fingers danced along her bare stomach for a moment, tapping away anxiously as she tried to think about something, anything other than Mike, on top of her, his rigid, toned muscles pressing into her soft skin as he...

Before she knew it, her fingers had danced all the down her stomach to where her underwear began. She picked at the lace hem, biting her bottom lip as she closed her eyes and let her imagination wonder away with what she wanted Mike to do when he got home.

Those pesky, curious fingers slid under the lace hem, pressing gently into the soft skin just above that sweet spot that Mike always played with just right. Eleven kept her eyes closed, thoughts focused on memories and desires, what she'd felt in the past and what she wanted to feel again. As if her thoughts came to life, she felt a pressure against that spot.

She glanced down as her middle finger pushed against it, sending little spurts of pleasure and sensitivity rippling through her. Part of her told her to stop, to wait for Mike, but another part was still curious. In the end, her curiosity won out.

Letting her head fall back into the pillow, she let her thoughts wander back to Mike, back to what he looked like as he stepped out of the shower, bare body dripping and glistening under the florescent light. His hair that hung low, just under his eyebrows. How the muscles in his arm moved as he ran his fingers through his wet hair, how his back tensed.

She let out a light gasp as she brought herself more pleasure, her finger moving more rapidly against her clit as she continued to imagine him, down there between her legs after a hot shower together. Remembering what he felt like inside of her.

A soft moan escaped her lips as she continued to tease and toy with that oh so sensitive bit of flesh between her thighs. She could feel her wetness against her own fingers now, and it only fueled the memories and images of Mike she was conjuring up.

She jerked up when she heard someone clear their throat from the doorway. She stared wide eyed as Mike smirked at her, his shoulder leaning against the doorframe. Her cheeks went flush immediately, and Mike couldn't help but think she was cute when she was embarrassed.

"What are you doing, El?" He asked, stalking towards the bed.

"Nothing."

"Nothing?" He clicked his tongue at her and shook his head. "It didn't look like nothing." He crawled onto the bed with her, climbing over her and hovering a few inches above. "It looks like maybe you were having some fun without me."

"No."

"It's alright, El," he chuckled, leaning down to kiss her quickly. "I enjoyed watching. But now that I'm home. Why don't you let me help." He slid down, taking the hem of her underwear and dragging them down her legs. He tossed them to the side, then knelt down so his head was placed between her thighs. Before she could protest, his tongue was pressed against her already aroused and sensitive sweet spot.

He worked his tongue and lips expertly, bringing Eleven's imagination to life. It was almost too good to be true. She gasped and moaned, her hands grabbing at the sheets underneath her. His tongue began to flick over her clit repeatedly, and her legs began to tremble as she approached the end of her journey.

"M-Mike!" She cried out, one hand burying in his shaggy black mane and the other bracing herself against the bed. Her legs tried to snap shut, but he forced them to remain apart, pushing them back into the bed and continuing his tongue assault until she rode it out entirely. He sat back on his knees, running his tongue over his lips.

"Better?"

"Yes," she panted, closing her eyes and laying back on the bed. "Much better." She was still a little embarrassed that he had seen her touching herself, but it worked out in the end. Mike did a much better job anyways. "You're home too soon."

"Hopper had business to take care of at the station with some of the men from the lab. He didn't want me there so they didn't know I worked there." He flopped down on the bed beside her, taking her hand in his and intertwining their fingers. He brought her hand up to his lips and kissed her palm gently. "I wasn't going to complain about coming home early to you."

"Me either." She smiled over at him. He pushed some of her brown waves out of her face. Her cheeks were still flush, but not nearly as much as before. Coming home early had ended up being good for both of them. He couldn't deny that.

---

Will's hands were braced against the toilet seat as his stomach heaved. A second slug slid from his lips, dead like the first one. Once it was out, the need to vomit started to slowly fade away. He sat back against the edge of the tub, one hand over his stomach and the other clutching his now aching throat.

He closed his eyes and tried to relax a little. It wasn't his first time vomiting slugs, and he tried to take comfort that these were at least dead. Maybe it was a sign that things were looking up for him again. He thought, at least, until a cold chill swept over him.

When Will opened his eyes, he was no longer on the floor in his bathroom. Not the bathroom he knew. No, this was dark and grimy, a thick coat of slime stuck to his back. Will was all too familiar with this place.

"No, please no." He shut his eyes again, bringing his hands up to cover his face. "ELEVEN!" He called out, knowing she was the only person that would hear him, and even that was a long shot. His chest started to heave as his breaths became ragged. Fear took hold of him, squeezing his lungs to the point that he couldn't breathe.

Suddenly, the cold disappeared. His eyes shot open, and his bathroom, the one he knew as his bathroom, was back to normal. The Upside Down had receded, as well as the sick feeling in his stomach. It was happening again. And it was never a good thing.

## 16. Chapter 16

Chapter 16:

Mike received a frantic call from Johnathan that same night. As it turned out, Johnathan had found Will screaming on the bathroom floor, then when he came to, Will started crying and throwing up black goo. Eleven seemed startled and concerned, but also, as she explained to Mike, she'd seen it happen before.

They hopped into Mike's old Chevy and sped off towards Wills house. Mike wasn't worried about getting a ticket or anything since he worked at the PD, so he pushed his car as far as he could to go as fast as it could. Will was one of his best friends, and he needed to get there as soon as possible to figure out how to help him.

Once they arrived, Mike and Eleven hurried into the house, welcomed in by a sobbing Nancy. Mike pushed passed everyone, not at all surprised to see Lucas and Dustin there, by Wills side. He paused in the doorway of the bathroom.

"Will, buddy..." There was black gooey liquid all over the floor, splattered against the tile. Will was sitting back against the tub, hunched over and hugging his knees. "Jesus... What the hell happened?" He knelt down in front of him.

"I went back there. To that place, then I got so sick," Will explained, his voice hoarse. "I don't know what's happening to me, Mike. I'm scared." Eleven slipped passed Johnathan and Nancy, moving to sit on the edge of the tub by Dustin so she could get a good look at Will.

"Hopper is on his way," Johnathan told the boys. "He's going to take Will to the hospital and have them treat him confidentially. They won't understand, and we can't explain. He promised nobody would ask questions or tell anyone anything."

That was good. Hopper was right to think that Wills condition might be hard to explain, and if they looked inside of him, who knew what they'd find. Those records couldn't be spread around. If they were, it would only cause problems, and everyone would have questions that

neither Hopper or Will and his family could answer.

"El, is there anything you can do?" Dustin asked, his voice soft and gentle for Wills sake. Eleven stared at Dustin for a moment, then turned her focus down to Will. She ran through her head, trying to remember what happened at the lab. How they handled it.

"Papa... fixed a man," she said, remembering that they had managed to save the man who was infected or sick or whatever it was. Dustin and Mike looked at each other hopefully.

"How?" Dustin asked Eleven. "How did he fix him? What did he fix?" Eleven stood, not knowing the right word for it. She lifted her shirt enough to show her flat stomach. She ran her fingertip up from her bellybutton to about where her chest began.

"Cut," she told them.

"Cut?" Mike's brow furrowed. "You mean they cut him open? Some type of surgery?"

"Surgery," she repeated with a nod, tracing her finger back down her stomach to make sure he understood. "Eggs... inside." There were a lot of big words and medical terms she remembered hearing, but she never understood any of it. "The lab," she explained. "Will should go."

"It is empty now," Lucas reminded everyone. "Maybe we can get Hoppet to take us there. He has access after they raided it. I bet the tools and stuff are still there. If Eleven is right, we have to get those eggs out as soon as possible. They're going to kill him."

"He'll be here soon. We can ask him then," Nancy sniffed, looking a little hopeful now like everyone else. Will hugged his stomach, letting out a low groan of pain and resting his head against his knees.

"The slugs inside must be trying to get home. Thats why you go to the Upside Down. When they try to go, they take you with them." Mike didnt know a better explanation, but it seemed to make sense to everyone else.

They all stayed close to Will, waiting impatiently until Hopper arrived. Whatever they had to do to save Will, they would do. They

went through hell and back to save him, and they weren't about to let him go again. No, they would save him. No matter what.

---

After talking things over with Hopper, the older cop promised to get clearance into the lab. He knew someone, a nurse, who he could trust to help with the surgery without telling anyone about it. If Hopper trusted her, the rest of them did.

In the morning, they would take Will to the lab. Eleven would show them where they needed to take him, and what she remembered being used. It was a long shot, but it was all they had. Those things inside of Will were going to kill him.

Once it was all figured out, Mike drove himself and Eleven home for the night. They would meet up at Wills at six the next morning, so they needed a full night worth of rest. It would be a long, hard day, but hopefully, they would finally fix Will.

Eleven fell asleep first, tired and worn from the intense evening. She fell asleep on Mike's chest, her favorite place to lay and his favorite place for her to lay. He cradled her close, running his fingertips down her upper arm slowly and tenderly.

Going to sleep was peaceful and calm, but almost as soon as she dozed off, that serenity vanished entirely. Eleven had gone back to that awful place, to the Upside Down.

When she opened her eyes, she was in Mike's apartment, but on the other side, their side. She looked around, fear squeezing her lungs and causing her to breathe in and out rapidly. She wanted to scream and panic, but she knew it would draw attention to herself.

She instead moved to the window, peeling back the crusty, rigid curtains that were normally soft. At least in their world. Outside of the house, she could see those things, two of them, stalking down the street. Very faintly, she could hear their growls, their calls to the others.

They were all slinking into the woods, swarming almost into a group of six. Eleven somehow knew exactly where they were going. Those

slugs inside of Will were put there by the Demogorgons. They were going back to take them.

Eleven rushed down the steps, pausing as they disappeared into the cover of the trees. She had to get to Wills house as quickly as possible. If she didnt make it there in time, those things would get their hands on Will. Everyone in that house was in danger, and Eleven was the only one who could stop them. There was no time to waste.

---

At some point in the middle of the night, Mike stirred. Mostly because he was parched, but he came to instantly when he rolled over and found only emptiness beside him. He sat upright, eyes adjusting to the dark.

"El?" He called for her, sliding out of bed and moving to the bathroom. It was empty as well, so he headed into the kitchen. "Eleven, where are you?" He called out, desperate to find her, to figure out where she'd gone. Concern took hold immediately when he didnt find her out in the living room.

The phone rang, startling Mike a little. He gave his apartment one last scan before hurrying back to the phone. He lifted it from the reciever and put it to his ear.

"Hello?"

"Mike!" Came Nancy's frantic voice. "The lights, they're f-flickering. You need to hurry!" She was terrified, and it only added to his panic. Eleven was gone, and while every bone in his body begged to search for her first, he knew that Nancy needed him right then and there, and Nancy wasnt able to defend herself like El.

He ran to his bedroom, pulling his gun from under the bed. Hopper had given it to him when he started working at the PD, and he was grateful for it. He slid it into the back of his jeans, then flew through the house to the front door. After snatching his keys up, he ran down to the car and jumped inside. He would find Eleven, he promised himself, but first he had to get to Wills. They all were in danger, and Mike wouldn't let anything happen to them.

He pulled up in the driveway within mere minutes, and he threw open his car door. Nancy wasn't lying, not that he thought she would've been. The lights in the house were flickering rapidly from room to room. This was something big, something dangerous. He pulled his gun from his jeans and went running into that danger.

---

Hey guys! Here's Chapter 16 :) the second part of the update will come to tomorrow as chapter 17. Hope you enjoy them both! Sorry for the long ass wait XD being sick sucked and its been a struggle to get back on track and catch up on everything but im working on it!

## 17. Chapter 17

Sorry for the delay :) we had company come over unexpectedly last night. However, here it is! Hope you enjoy, and thanks so much for all the amazing reviews. Really, you guys are super amazing. Some of the best readers I've ever had. Thanks again, and enjoy! As long as you're reading, I'll keep writing :)

---

### Chapter 17:

Mike held the gun at his side, trying to keep his hand steady. The lights flickered and flashed violently all around them. He waved Nancy down the hall, pushing her into the room with Joyce and Will, the people who weren't in any shape to fight.

Johnathan hugged Nancy tightly, kissing her forehead and promising her he wouldn't let anything happen to her. It made Mike a little sad, thinking back to when they made these promises several months ago, when they were trapped in the lab.

He pushed those thoughts aside. He had to stay calm and in control. If he slipped back into that dark place again, he wouldn't be able to focus on the task at hand. His friends and family needed him to stay on his toes.

"Call if you need us," Johnathan told Nancy. Joyce bent down to pull a shotgun out from under the bed. She fumbled nervously to check and make sure it was loaded. She had bought a couple guns for the house after everything that happened last time.

"Be careful, Johnathan," Joyce urged, her eyes wide and tearful. She put an arm around Will and pulled him close. "Don't do anything stupid." He almost chuckled at that, but the situation was way too intense. He just nodded back to his mother.

Mike and Johnathan left the bedroom to join Dustin and Lucas and Hopper in the living room. Dustin and Lucas were sitting on the edge of the couch, their elbows on their knees that were bouncing nervously. Mike sucked in a deep breath,

"What are they waiting for?" He asked to no one in particular.

"They're circling us. Probably trying to find the kid," Hopper answered, taking a puff from his cigarette. "We have to kill those things inside of him. They're drawing them to him."

"The Demogorgons wont be able to find him once we take them out?" Dustin asked aloud, though no one knew the answer. Hopper shrugged his shoulders in response.

"We cant let them take him again," Lucas commented with a shaky voice. "They'll use him like their own personal incubator. We'll lose him for good this time." They all knew it was true. If Will got dragged there again, they wouldn't let him out of their sights. Like any protective parents, they'd guard their eggs and the slugs with their lives.

Mike moved to the front window, peering out and wondering where the hell they were, where Eleven was. It was all too coincidental that she disappeared at the same time those things went after Will. Mike chose to believe she was doing something to help, and that she was okay. The twisting in his gut forced him to try and be optimistic.

"Oh shit," Dustin shouted, jumping up from the couch. Lucas moved with him, away from the wall adjacent to them. The goo spread like it was alive, stretching over the peeling wallpaper and opening a doorway, one similar to the ones they had seen before. It was unmistakable. They were coming through.

The sound of screeching came first, and everyone braced for the worst. A clawed hand came through, followed by the rest of the grey mass that was a Demogorgon. It stood, its flower like face unfolding to expose its teeth. It screeched again, and Hopper raised his gun and shot at it. Not just to injure it, but also to bring its attention to him.

The Demogorgon turned to Hopper and roared loudly. Hopper popped off another shot before it lunged for him. Mike rushed to Hopper's aid, throwing his shoulder into the Demogorgon and knocking it to the side. Hopper spit out the back end of his cigarette; the sudden collision with the monster caused him to bite his cigarette in half.

Mike yelled out at the Demogorgon grabbed him by the arm and flung him to the side, sending him crashing into the coffee table. The wood splintered under his weight, and it snapped beneath him. Mike groaned and struggled to catch his breath again.

Lucas dragged Mike away from that end of the room as another grey mass struggled through the doorway they opened.

"Get up," Lucas urged him. Mike pushed himself up, though a sharp pain shot up his spine as he did. Dustin helped Lucas pull Mike up to his feet, then away from the second Demogorgon. Hopper moved until he was standing in front of the boys, holding his gun out in front of him.

It was all panic inducing to witness. The lights flashing, the growls and snarls from the monsters closing in, it was all enough to cause them to shut down, to let the panic take control. Hopper, however, was surprisingly steady. He fired off two shots into one of them, and it shrunk away for a moment. The other continued to approach them slowly, claws ready, mouth unfolded.

Then, just before it lunged for Mike and the others, it was flung through the front window. The shattering caused Mike's ears to ring for a moment, and he brought his hands up to cover them. Where the Demogorgon had been standing, El had now taken its place.

She was dirty, covered in the black goo that they knew to be a part of the Upside Down. That's where she had been. Mike went to step towards her, but Hopper held him back. Mike pushed against Hopper's arm, but stopped when the remaining monster turned on Eleven.

Blood poured down from her nose as she pushed the Demogorgon back against the wall. It snarled and screeched, but she held it there firmly with nothing more than her mind, her will. Her eyes fluttered closed, and her entire body tensed up. The snarling was stopped immediately by a loud snapping sound, like splintering wood. The Demogorgon curled up like a dead spider, then slid to the ground.

The second one came scrambling back through the window, but instead of attacking, it retreated through the door, the portal, they

created. It sank in on itself, the goo bleeding into the wall, then disappearing completely. Eleven turned to them.

"Mike," she breathed, her voice scratchy. She took a stumbling step towards him, then collapsed. Mike shoved through Hopper's arm, rushing to Eleven's.

"El!" He cried, pulling her into his arms. He reached for her neck, pushing two fingers against her throat to feel for a pulse. She was alive, just unconscious. He let out a sigh of relief, then hugged her to his chest. She had saved their lives again. Again and again, it seemed at times.

The lights shut off completely, leaving the room in darkness and silence. At least they stopped flickering, which meant those monsters had retreated for the time being. Hopper moved to Mike and Eleven, scooping up the small, frail girl in his arms.

"Grab Will. We're taking him to the lab now," Hopper ordered Mike, Lucas, and Dustin. Mike, meet me at the cruiser. We'll take Eleven and Ride together. The rest of ya grab Will, bring him and Johnathan and any guns you can grab."

Hopper handed Eleven to Mike, and they hurried out to Hopper's car. Mike slid into the back with Eleven, not even minding the lack of leg room. He laid her across the seat, then sat with her head in his lap. He brushed her hair with his fingers, gently tugging out the goo and dirt that was causing it to tangle.

He watched out of the window and Lucas and Dustin walked Will to Johnathan's car. They jumped in, with Johnathan in the driver's seat, and the car lit up. Hopper climbed into the front seat of the cruiser.

"Alright. Let's get this over with." He started the car, then drove out of the driveway first. Johnathan's headlights were right behind them the whole way. Mike used his shirt to wipe away the blood from Elevens lips and nose. He silently willed her to wake up, but her eyes stayed closed.

She wouldnt be there to help them at the lab, which was not a good thing. They were in trouble, but it would be worth it, in the end, to

save Will's life again.

A pang of something painful shot through Mike's chest as he thought about going back to ghay place, where he had seen and been the cause of so much death. His grip on Eleven tightened a little as the memories of the murder and chaos swept through him.

Hopper looked up in the rearview mirror at him. That fear and regret was easy to read on his face. Hopper knew the cause of it, but he didn't want to mention it directly and make it worse. He had to ask, however, if Mike would be okay, if he would be able to go through with this.

"You alright, son?" He asked Mike.

"I will be. When this is over."

## 18. Chapter 18

Chapter 18:

Mike stood with Eleven to the side as Hopper and the young woman he brought to do the operation stood around an unconscious Will. They had masks and gloves on, and the nurse used everything the lab gave her to use in order to help Will.

Once they pulled every last egg casing out of Will, Lucas carried them over to a corner in the room, and Dustin helped him set them all on fire. Mike joined them as they stood to watch the eggs burn. It was satisfying in a weird sort of way, but no one said it out loud.

Being back in the lab again brought hellish memories back to Mike. It sent chills through him each time they passed a blood stain on the wall or the tile, like nobody ever cleaned it up after the near massacre that took place there. That twisting feeling of guilt churned in his gut, but Eleven was there, at his side, holding onto his hand tightly. It made it a little easier.

While Hopper and the nurse finished up with Will, Mike and the others waited out in the hallway. Mike looked around, soaking in the dark hallway, and remembering what it had been like when it was still up and running, when they were trapped there and he had to kill to get out.

"Mike?" Eleven said his name softly, the concern in her eyes giving away her real question. He leaned over to kiss her forehead.

"I'm alright, El. Really." He didn't necessarily feel alright, but he also knew that the memories were just as bad or worse for Eleven in that place. It reeked of must and the familiar black goo from another dimension. Mike felt sick.

"You think they're almost done?" Dustin asked, leaning back against the wall tiredly. It had been such a long day and night, and they were all ready for it to be over.

"I just hope she knows what she's doing," Lucas huffed, peering

through the window of the door into the room where they were stitching Will up. "She's cute. Let's hope she's good at her job."

"Hopper wouldn't have brought her if she wasn't," Dustin shrugged. "She's probably helped him before with something. If he trusts her, I trust her. Will is like Hopper's own son, you know? He wouldn't put him at risk."

After a few more minutes, Hopper came out of the room, carrying a still unconscious Will. The young girl came out behind him, pulling her mask down.

Dustin was right. She was pretty cute. She was young with soft, feminine features. Her eyes were a bright blue that were noticeable even in the dark, and she had long, straight blond hair that was pulled back in a messy bun.

"Give him a few days of rest. Monitor him closely. Replace the bandages twice a day, and check for any signs of bleeding or puss. If you need anything else, Hop, just let me know." She offered a soft smile to the gang. "It was nice meeting y'all." Her accent was thick with Southern flavor. It only added to her image.

"Thanks, Maggie," Hopper sighed. "Tell your ma I said hello. Keep your phone on you." She nodded at him, then at the other boys before leaving out the way they came in. Dustin and Lucas watched her go, then looked at one another. "Don't even think about it," Hopper shot a glare at them.

"What?"

"Don't play dumb, kid. You don't think I know you boys will go pining after a pretty girl like that? Well, I'm warning you now, she's got her issues. Sweet girl, bad family." He started down the hall, and Lucas and Dustin stayed silent.

Finally, the surgery was over, and Will had a chance, a real chance, at getting better. He wouldn't be sick anymore, wouldn't be dragged back to the Upside Down by the slugs trying to get to where they belonged. No Demogorgons would come for their eggs anymore. Everyone had hope, genuine hope, that things would get better now.

---

Mike winced as he peeled his shirt over his head. Eleven frowned empathetically when she saw the large blue and black bruises covering nearly the entire lower half of his back. The monsters had hurt him, and she didn't get there in time to stop them.

"At least the table broke my fall, right?" Mike joked, though she clearly didn't find it funny. Eleven scooted closer to where he was sitting on the end of the bed. She touched it lightly with her fingertips, and he bit back any and all expressions of pain so he didn't make her feel bad for touching him like that. "It'll be okay, El."

"Doctor," she said with furrowed brows. "Lilly." Mike had forgotten the young nurse's name, so for a moment, he just looked back at Eleven in confusion. When he realized who she was talking about, he shook his head.

"No, El. I don't need a doctor. It's just some bruising. It'll go away." She didn't seem so convinced. However, he turned to face her so that his bruised back was hidden from view. "You scared the hell out of me tonight, El. I was worried you'd be gone for another seven years."

"Never," she promised, sitting up a little to kiss him softly. She'd gotten so much better at kissing, and without any help from Mike, she'd learned to take his breath away with just her lips pressed into his, moving over them softly, in rhythm.

Mike lifted a hand to cup her face, brushing his thumb over her still dirty cheek. They were both in bad shape after the night's events, so Mike carefully slid off the bed and offered his hand to her. She took it, and followed behind him as he led her into the bathroom.

He turned on the shower, and they began undressing while the water warmed up. Eleven pulled his belt loose, then unbuttoned his jeans and pushed them and his boxers down for him so he didn't strain his back. In return, Mike pulled Eleven's shirt over her head, then watched a little hungrily as she shed her shorts and underwear.

Eleven stepped in first, immediately dipping her head under the hot water to wash some of the grime and goo from the Upside Down out of her hair. Mike reached around to help, running his hands through

her hair, massaging the water through it.

She turned back around to face him, letting the water run down her back. Mike picked up the shampoo he'd ought for her, squeezing some into his hand and lifting it to her tangle mass of brown curls. She stared at him for a moment, with those wide doe eyes, then tilted her head back to give him a better angle to lather the shampoo into her hair.

He stepped forward, pushing her back a little until her hair was under the water again. His bare chest was pressing into hers now, and she enjoyed the skin to skin contact. He was warm against her, and she had spent an awful lot of time that night in a cold, dark hell.

Once Mike was finished washing her hair for her, they switched placed. As he worked on his own shaggy black mane, Eleven rubbed the bar of soap into a wash cloth and began wiping at the stickiness on her arms and legs and cheeks.

Mike watched her for a moment, just admiring her figure, her curves and flush cheeks. She was so beautiful to him, like something he would have only imagined ever being so close to. Once she was clean, he took the rag for her hand and set it to the side.

"Come here," he told her, taking her hand in his and bringing her closer to him. Eleven looked up at him, noticing the hunger in his eyes for the first time. She wanted him as badly as he wanted her, she was sure, but Eleven was also aware of his injured back. If she let him put in the effort to pleasure her, he would hurt himself.

"Let me," she said softly, sliding down to her knees.

"El, no," Mike frowned, taking her hands in his and trying to pull her upright. "I want to make you feel good, too."

"Your back," she reminded him, looking up at him. "It'll hurt."

"What about you?" He scoffed at her. "Just a few hours ago you exhausted yourself and passed out on Will's living room floor."

"I'm okay," she reassured him, taking his hardening shaft in her hand. "Let me. Please." She started to stroke him, slowly taking from him all

desire to argue with her. He closed his eyes and leaned back against the wall. It was hard to change her mind about things, especially when she was already very sure of what she wanted.

She lowered her mouth to him, kissing the tip gently before parting her lips and taking him in. Her own eyes fluttered closed as she tried to remember everything she had learned, all his sensitive spots and tender areas, so she could work her tongue, lips, and mouth properly.

Mike ran a hand through her hair, letting out an array of pants, moans, and sighs. He wanted so badly to hear such noises from her, but she was right. He wouldnt have been able to do much in the state he was in, with his back in as much pain as it was.

She started to move faster, getting more comfortable with the rhythm of her lips as they slid over his skin. Mike didnt hold out for very long. It was hard when she was getting so good at what she was doing. Mike curled his fingers in her hair, pulling her head closer, to push himself far down her throat as he climaxed.

Fearing he may have hurt her, he immediately pulled his hand from her hair once it was over. He sat back with a heavy sigh, reaching up to run a hand down his face.

"Im sorry, El, I didnt mean to."

"It's okay," she smiled, pushing herself up to her feet. She leaned over to kiss his cheek. "I like it." Mike raised an eyebrow at her.

"You like it? Like what?"

"When it hurts a little."

"Jeez, El," he chuckled. "I never wouldve guessed you would turn out to be this kinky." He pushed his body off of the wall and brought her in for a hug. "I promise when my back gets better we can try some new things I think you'll like." If she wanted rough, he could be rough. Mike was a little excited about the things he could try with El that he'd never tried before.

"Okay," she beamed, laying her cheek against his firm chest. She loved his warmth, loved his bare skin on hers. He was as comfortable

as a hot shower just by himself.

"I love you," he said suddenly, kissing the top of her head. "I'm so glad you came back to me, El. I don't know what I'd do without you." She hugged him tightly,

"I know. I love you, too."

## 19. Chapter 19

Hey guys sorry for the wait :) had the holidays and then some stuff to take care of. But im done with it for the most part. I know this is kind of a filler chapter, but the next will have the smut you guys have been wanting, I promise :) i hope you enjoy anyways! Ill update sooner for the next chapter.

---

### Chapter 19:

Will stirred for the first time after the surgery. His stomach ached, a throbbing that was immediately irritating as soon as he became conscious. The next thing he noticed was the smell of perfume. It was a sweet, flowery smell, like one of the ladies stores his mom used to drag him to when he was young. He inhaled deeply.

"Good mornin'," a soft voice came from beside him. Will opened his eyes and turned his head to see the nurse from before sitting in a chair beside his bed. She glanced down at her watch. "You only slept for a few hours. You probably need a little more."

"I'm alright," he said weakly, moving to push himself up on his elbows. She instantly threw her hands out to grab his shoulders and prevent him from moving anymore.

"Whoa, whoa, cowboy, it's a little too soon to movin' around so much." She pushed him down onto his back again, and he stared up at her. She was chewing spearmint gum; he could smell it on her breath. The pretty blond flopped back down in the chair, taking a deep breath and crossing her legs. "You went through a pretty extensive surgery, Will. You have to take it easy."

"I forgot your name," he said, ignoring her warning. "Hopper said it at some point last night, but I forgot." She smiled a bit at that, biting on her bottom lip for a moment.

"It's Maggie."

"Maggie," he repeated with a slow nod. "Thank you... so much for

what you did for me. I really think that things will be different now." She listened to him carefully, and once he was done speaking, she leaned forward and rested her elbows on her knees.

"Look, I know I'm not supposed to be asking questions here, but... what the hell happened to you?" She asked with a furrowed brow. "Those things that were inside you... I dont know how something like that gets there. I've never seen anything like it."

"It's a long story," he told her honestly. "I'm too tired to tell it right now." There was too much to explain, and not enough of it sounded sane. She would question it all, doubt most of it, and more than likely assume they were all crazy. He didnt feel good enough to go through it all.

"What about later?"

"What?"

"Well, you said right now," Maggie reminded him. "Does that mean you might tell me later? Maybe over a cup of coffee or some greasy french fries?" She leaned back in her chair and Will stared at her for a long moment. When he didnt answer, she shook her head, "You're right. Hopper said no questions. You dont have to tell me anything, Will."

"No," Will said quickly, a little louder than he meant to. Either way, it got her attention. "No, we can... go to dinner sometime. I'll try to explain as best as I can. I mean... if you're really curious." She was curious, very much so, but she definitely had anterior motives regarding dinner.

It was odd. She had performed surgery on him mere hours ago, and now she was practically asking him on a date. Maybe that was a little weird. Either way, there weren't many people she hadn't met in Hawkins, and thus far none of them were potentially date-worthy. Maggie was beginning to thing she'd never meet a guy in that ragged old town, but then there was Will.

"I am. Rest up the next week. Take care of your bandages. Once you're up and around, we'll figure out dinner." She glanced over at

the nightstand next to his bed, snatching up a pen from the cup that sat on top of it. "Here." She popped the cap off and took his hand in hers, writing down her home number really quickly. "Call me if you need me. Or just when you get to moving around again."

She flashed him another pretty smile, winking one of her bright blue eyes in his direction. She stood, then moved the chair back to his desk.

"See you around," she waved as she moved towards the door.

"See you," Will said just as she disappeared from view. He shook his brown bangs from his face and laid back against the pillow to stare up at the ceiling. He could hardly believe a girl that pretty had asked him to go to dinner with her, but he most certainly wasn't going to complain. With the eggs gone, he had a chance at a normal life. Maybe his normal life could include a pretty nurse.

---

Mike winced a little as Eleven pressed her fingertips into the bruise on his back. She was growing more and more concerned about how slow it was healing. He knew that it would take awhile, but when he tried to explain to her, she just repeated the word doctor.

"I'm fine, El, I promise," he sighed, tugging his shirt back down and turning around slowly to face her. He took her shoulders in his hands, brushing his thumbs over them gently. "You worry too much. Really. I don't need a doctor."

"You do," she argued with a frown. Mike rolled his eyes at her, then leaned forward to kiss her cheek gently. She wasn't satisfied with that response, but she said nothing else. Eleven knew when to stop pushing, when she was right at that edge of annoying him.

"So, Will called," Mike changed the subject effortlessly, though Eleven was not entirely ignorant to his reason for doing so. "Apparently the nurse that Hopper brought to the lab asked him out on a date. He wanted to know if you and I would go with them. He's nervous because he's never been on a date before."

"But... a date is.. two?" She asked curiously.

"Usually, but people also do double dates where there's two couples that go out together. It's not all that weird, but I told him I had to talk to you about it first." This was something that was a little out of the realm of their relationship. With everything going on, they'd barely been able to do things together as a normal couple. Maybe this was their chance.

"If you want to, I do," she shrugged her shoulders. It was something she didn't quite understand, but she would do anything for or with Mike. He knew that, but he also wanted her to understand that she always had a say so in these matters. That was important to him.

"I'm going to try and convince him to go on his own, but if he's too scared, then I guess we'll go. I hope he gets to experience all these things now. He deserves to be happy after all these years." He made a face that made Eleven kind of sad.

"He will be." She reached up to touch his face gently, smiling. He nodded down to her, leaning to kiss her lips gently. She had a way of making him feel confident that things would be just perfect, even when he knew well enough that they wouldn't be.

He pulled away after a moment, moving to the kitchen to start digging through the fridge for something to eat.

"We're out of eggos, babe," he told her while he dug, "so what else would you want for dinner?" She blinked at the pet name, having never heard it before. She didn't say anything about it, instead choosing to just smile a bit.

"Cereal."

"Cereal?" He scoffed playfully, turning to look at her. "Just cereal?"

"Mhm," she nodded. Mike sighed, then reached back into the fridge for some milk.

"What kind?"

"Chocolate."

"The chocolate kind?" He asked to clarify. She nodded, so he pulled

the Cocoa Pebbles from the cabinet to start fixing them both a bowl. It was nice, to feel like life might go back to normal for the most part. It excited Mike, thinking about what their life was going to be like without labcoats and monsters.

## 20. Chapter 20

### Chapter 20:

Will sat awkwardly in silence for a long moment. He stirred his milkshake with a straw, embarrassment creeping into his cheeks, staining them red. Across from him sat Maggie, the nurse that made him normal again. He owed so much to her, and yet he couldn't think of the right things to say in that moment.

"Well, Will Byers, you're not much for words, are you?" She chuckled a bit, leaning back against the booth and pulling her own shake to her chest so she could sip from the straw. Will panicked even more, she noticed, so she reached across the table to lay her hand over his. "Hey, it's not so bad to be shy. I think it's cute. Start slow. Like... why didn't your friends come?"

"I-I told them not to," Will cleared his throat, trying to get a little more confidence in himself. It was hard. This was, after all, his first real date. "Mike said... I should do this on my own." His eyes were fixated on where her hand was touching his on the table.

"Well you're not exactly alone. I'm here." She shrugged her small shoulders and smiled. She was so pretty. Will still wondered why a girl like her was even interested in him. Will had a small frame, weak from years of sickness and pain. He was pale, though he was getting better day by day.

"This is..."

"Your first date?" She questioned with a raise of her eyebrow. "I wouldn't have thought so, but that's okay. I'm honored." He blushed at that, but a smile tugged at his lips ever so slightly. Maggie knew she'd eventually get him to loosen up. "So, Will. Tell me a little about what happened to you."

"It's a long story, Maggie," he frowned a bit, dropping his gaze. "You're not even going to believe any of it. It's crazy... really crazy."

"I pulled eggs and slugs from your intestines, Will. At this point, I

might just believe anything." She squeezed his hand. "Come on, Will. Try me." He stared up at her for a moment, wondering if telling her would scare her away. Deep down, Will knew if he wanted to bring anyone into his world, he would have to tell them the truth.

"When I was a kid, I... was abducted," he began, gripping the edge of the table tightly as he recalled it all. "I was taken by this thing, this... monster. We called it the Demogorgon."

"Like the Dungeons and Dragons monster?" She asked with a soft chuckle. Will eyed her.

"You know Dungeons and Dragons?"

"I may have... dabbled in it as a kid. I watched my older brother play with his friends." She leaned even closer, curiosity twinkling in her bright blue eyes. "Go on. It took you. Where?"

"Eleven calls it the Upside Down, so that's what we call it. It's... where the Demogorgon came from. Where they live."

"They?"

"There's more than one now. We don't know how many. They're humanoid, but they have no face. Just a mouth. A really big mouth." He snorted at the memory of the first time he saw it. How it terrified him. He hated these memories. "It took me, but I got away from it. I hid, but I was still trapped there. It's difficult, travelling back and forth. I couldn't... get home but I could sometimes communicate with my mom. It was hard. To hide and talk to her at the same time."

"She found you?"

"She did," he nodded. "She never gave up, even though people thought she was crazy because I was talking through the lights. She... put up Christmas lights. We don't know why it works that way. It just does. She came in with Hopper, to that place, but the Demogorgon had caught me. It... did something to me. Put something down my throat."

"How many years were those eggs in you?"

"Seven," he answered honestly. "I've been sick for seven years after they pulled me out." Maggie looked deep in thought for a moment. Will could practically see the wheels turning in her head.

"Do the slugs lay eggs then? For them to continue hatching for so many years... either the slugs reproduce or the eggs have varying incubation periods. That's... odd."

"You believe me?" Will asked in disbelief, his eyes wide. He expected to have to show her what Eleven could do to prove it. Maggie met his gaze, then nodded.

"It explains how the eggs got inside of you. Hopper was real hush hush about all of it, but I knew it was something weird. The lab, the slugs, it was all so weird." She wasn't in Hawkins when it all happened, but she knew, at the very least, that Hopper had covered up something major, something he wouldn't tell her about. Will had to be telling the truth. He believed it. It made sense with everything she'd already experienced.

"How does Mike's girl play into all of this?" She asked after a moment of silence, taking a sip from her shake mindlessly. Will took a deep breath.

"I didn't know much about her except what the guys told me. I never met her back then. They say she was an experiment at the lab we were at, back when it was up and running. They... made her do things she didn't want to because she has... abilities. Like. She can move things with her mind. Or find people no one else can."

"That's why she doesn't talk much?"

"Yeah. I guess they were more worried about improving her mental powers instead of teaching her proper grammar and language. She knows how to talk, mostly." He smiled a bit. "She's sweet. Even more innocent than me."

"Hm, did you have a crush on her, Will Byers?" Magie grinned at him playfully. Will shrugged his shoulders.

"I wouldn't call it that. I feel connected to her. Whenever I would

wake up in that place, she'd find me. She was the only one that could help me. I'm grateful to her. But... that is and always will be Mike's girl. Before she came back, he was... much different. I would sometimes notice him when he was alone, he looked...sad, empty even. He put up a good front, but we all saw it. Mike was... hollowed out all those years ago when she vanished."

"I've always wanted that kind of love," Maggie sighed, leaning her cheek on her hand. "Unconditional. Undying. I'm a little bit of a hopeless romantic, but I guess it can't be helped. Most of my friends are already married or engaged or pregnant."

"But not you."

"Not me," she repeated with another sigh. "I went to college. Got a job. Wanted a life of my own first. I wasn't content with being a housewife or some secretary that businessmen could oggle day in and day out."

"So instead you became a nurse that doctors could oggle day in and day out," Will teased her a bit. She was easy to talk to, once he got to talking. It was a relief. She let out a playful scoff, then sat upright again.

"No one oggles me."

"Are you sure about that?" He laughed. "You're exactly the kind of woman guys oggle."

"Is that a compliment, Will Byers?" She smirked at him, and Will felt her ankle rub against his calf. He blushed again, but smiled this time instead of looking away.

"I guess it is."

"Well, maybe there's hope for you yet."

---

Mike came through the front door of his apartment after a long and boring day at the department. There were little to no calls that day, so Mike spent most of his day spinning in his chair and going through the old files Hopper had on Eleven and Will.

Eleven came from the bedroom when she heard him come in, her hair dripping wet like she'd just gotten out of the shower in a hurry once she heard the front door. She smiled at him, tugging at the end of the tee shirt she wore that did little to cover the fact that she wasn't wearing anything else.

"Mike," she smiled. "I missed you."

"I missed you, too, El," he chuckled, walking over to her and leaning down to press a kiss to her forehead. "Nothing exciting happened today while I was gone, did it?" She shook her brown waves, sending droplets of water onto the much too large tee shirt she stole from his drawer. "Good. I brought you a present."

"A present?" She questioned, looking down at his empty hands. Mike smirked down at her, then reached into his back pocket to retrieve a pair of handcuffs he'd taken from the front desk at the PD that afternoon before he left. He dangled them in front of her. "Why?" She questioned, reaching up to touch them. Mike jerked them away before she could touch them.

"No, no, El. They're not for you to use." He popped one of them open, then took her hand in his and lifted it. He snapped the handcuff around her thin wrist. "You said you wanted to try new things. This is a new thing."

"What do I do?" She asked curiously, tugging a little against the cold metal. Eleven and Mike both knew that if she really wanted to escape the cuffs, she easily could. However, it was a game, and Eleven wanted to play by the rules.

"You let me do it all," he shrugged. "You sit back and enjoy." He pulled her towards the bedroom by the handcuff on her wrist, and she followed, wondering exactly what awaited her there.

Mike went to the bed, sitting on the edge and pulling Eleven so that she was standing in front of him. She took her by the shoulders and spun her around so that she was facing away. He gently and slowly pulled her arm behind her back, then did the same with the other. He cuffed her free hand, and left her arms and hands bound behind her back. She tugged lightly.

"What now?"

"Now," he took a deep breath, running his hands up her bare sides, then back down over her hips. "Now, I do whatever I want." Mike stood up behind her sweeping her soaked hair over one shoulder and trailing kisses up her shoulder, to her neck. Eleven's head tilted instinctively to give him more access, her eyes fluttering closed. "If I go too far, or I hurt you, tell me," he said in her ear.

"You won't." Eleven turned, then stood on her toes and pressed her lips to his, wrists straining a little against the cool metal restraints. Mike bent down and picked her up by her thighs, spinning her around so he could set her on the bed. With relative ease, he lifted her again to flip her onto her stomach. Mike's hands travelled to her hips again, pulling them up so they were level with his own.

"Are you sure?" He questioned softly, taking on the sultry tone he always did whenever they were in the bedroom. Eleven let out a stunned cry as she suddenly felt his hand smack her bottom. As unusual as it was, it sent a rush of something thrilling through her chest, making her heart pound a little harder in her ribcage.

"Mike?" A whimper escaped her lips. Another smack, on the opposite side, drew a gasp from her lips. She struggled a bit to avoid freeing her hands. No, Mike wanted her to wear them, to be vulnerable. She wanted it, too, so she steadied her arms behind her back.

"You can change your mind," he whispered. "You can say no. Or that it's hurts. I'll stop, El." His tone softened a bit at the end, like he was afraid he was frightening her or something. Eleven turned as much as she could against the mattress to look back at him.

"No," she said stubbornly. "More." Mike grinned a bit at her response, then began to pull his belt from the loops of his jeans. Once it was gone, he undid the button, then pushed them down to his ankles. He stepped out of them and kicked them to the side, leaving his boxers on. She waited anxiously for him to do more, to excite her more.

Mike trailed his fingertips up her inner thigh, drawing another whimper from her. He rubbed two of those fingers over her most sensitive area, then breached it with them. Eleven moaned a little as

his middle and ring fingers stretched her. It was always difficult at first for some reason. She didn't understand it, but it quickly got easier, and Mike began to move those fingers.

As he slid them in each time, he curled them upwards, causing her legs to shake with pleasure and numerous gasps, pants, and whines to slip from her lips. The chain between the cuffs tightened as she pulled at them, wanting so badly to grip onto anything she could get her hands on. Her fingers curled into her palms.

Mike ran a hand up her spine, then back down to smack her bottom again. He couldn't deny his own arousal, as it was now pressing up against the back of her thigh through his briefs. As soon as she was wet enough, he gave into his own desires. He reached to grab a handful of her hair, pulling her up by it a little, though he had a grip on her arms to ease the tension on her hair. He was careful with her, never pushing too far or pulling too hard. Mike had control, enough to avoid hurting her accidentally.

He stood her up again, then took his place on the edge of the bed. Mike pushed his boxers down his legs, leaving himself naked except for the white button up he still had on from work.

"Come here," he told her, tugging her to his lap by her waist. Eleven knew what he wanted her to do, so she straddled him, hovering above the thing she craved so badly until he could position it for her. She had no hands free to do it herself. Once he was ready, Eleven lowered herself onto it, struggling a little at first to take it all in. Eventually, every inch of him was buried inside her as she sat in his lap, panting heavily. Her head fell forward on his shoulder.

"My hands," she whined. "I can't."

"Sure you can. You don't need your hands," he practically purred in her ear. "Lift yourself with your legs," his hands gripped her thighs tightly, "and move that way." Eleven shifted a little, struggling to figure out how to move up and down without her hands braced against his shoulders. Her legs pushed her up enough finally, and she dropped back down. When she did, her body protested at the sudden fullness, and Eleven cried out.

"M-Mike."

"Is it okay?" He asked, kissing her shoulder, her collarbone, then her lips. She nodded.

"It's good." She continued to push up with her legs, even if she struggled to get used to the movements. It was worth it when she saw Mike's eyes close, and his head tilt back. She did, eventually, get used to the movement. The muscles in her legs wanted her to stop, but the pleasure rippling through her and Mike both only pushed her to move faster. She bounced as rapidly as she could on his lap, taking him in then lifting her body away just to do it all over again.

"That's it," he panted, hands on her hips now, helping her and easing some of the stress on her legs. Her own head fell back, her chestnut curls bouncing with her hips. "That's it, El. Like that." The chain of the cuffs was straining as she longed to touch him, to grab those broad shoulders so she could move even faster, make him feel even better.

Mike grabbed her arms and brought them together behind her, preventing her from breaking that restricting chain.

"No, El. No hands. It feels good, just like this," he grunted, his own pelvis moving a little with hers. "Please don't stop." He hugged her close to his body so he could keep her arms pinned, and she didn't fight it anymore. She could see him getting closer to that edge they both loved to push each other over. Eleven did as told, keeping her rhythm, rolling her hips as she bounced.

"Mike," she moaned his name, her body starting to constrict. "I can't."

"Just a little longer, El." His grip on her hips tightened, moving her a little faster, pulling her down on him a little harder. His head rested against her shoulder as he brought himself closer and closer. Eleven was shaking now, trying her best to hold back the tidal wave of pleasure that wanted to overtake her.

"Mike, hurry."

"Now, El," he groaned, throwing his head back and pulling her down

rapidly. Eleven finally let go, let that pulse rock her body against his, shaking her from head to toe, making her muscles tense all over. Mike's body tensed as well, as his own orgasm exploded from within him. He wrapped his arms around her back, hugging her to his chest as they both climaxed together, as one. Even finally snapped that chain to wrap her arms around his neck, holding him as he held her.

Mike laid back, bringing her down onto the bed with him. They were both panting heavily, sweating from the rapid movements and the heat from each of their bodies. He looked up at her, brushing her wild locks behind her ear.

"Well?"

"I like it," she smiled breathlessly, giggling a little. "A lot, Mike."

"Good," he kissed her softly. "That's good, El. Are your wrists okay?" She held up one of them, the broke cuff still on her wrist like a bracelet with a charm dangling from it.

"I broke them. I'm sorry."

"It's okay," he chuckled. "I work at a police station. I'll get a new pair."

"For next time?"

"Yes," he at her. "For next time."

---

**There ya go :D got the date, and the smut all in this incredibly long chapter. Took longer than I anticipated. My kitty, Milo, got sick, and he's been refusing to eat or drink. It's been scary and sad, but he's not gotten any worse. He moves a little more every day so... fingers crossed! Hope you enjoyed :) can't wait to read your reviews!**

## 21. Chapter 21

Hey guys! I wanted to throw an idea your way to see what you think :) im considering starting another Stranger Things fic. This one wont end of course (not yet lol) but I was thinking of setting it right at the end of high school for the boys. Would you guys want to read a different story at all, though? Let me know :) also, as usual, enjoy!

---

Chapter 20:

Maggie felt like a dream to Will. She was a perfectly normal, perfectly beautiful woman that liked him, that wanted to be around him. He had gotten comfortable around her, so much so that he invited her to Mike's for Dustin and Lucas' end of the summer get together.

Maggie was just excited at the potential of having friends. The hours she worked when she first became a nurse made it hard to have a social life. Not to mention, most of the girls she spent time with in high school left after graduation and never came back. Hawkins was a small town, and most people couldnt wait to move on to bigger things.

Will and Maggie got there after everyone else. Lucas and Dustin were already trying to convince Mike to let Eleven take shots with them. Will gently closed the door behind himself and Maggie, but gained everyone's attention finally.

"Will!" Lucas cheered loudly. "You made it. You even brought the hot nurse." Will blushed immediately, and Maggie just laughed. She extended her hand to Mike, the owner of the apartment, to be polite.

"Hi, I'm the hot nurse, but you can call me Maggie." Mike shook her hand, then glanced over just in time to see Dustin encouraging Eleven to throw back a shot. He sighed and rolled his eyes.

"Come on, guys, she's never taken shots before. You're going to make her sick." Maggie looked back at Will amongst the chaos, and he

almost looked apologetic. She moved to where he was standing and grabbed his hand.

"They seem like lovely people. Now, Will Byers, let's see which one of us has the stronger liver." She shot him a wink, then pulled him along to join in on whatever drinking game Lucas and Dustin were trying to teach El.

---

Once everything began to die down, and Dustin and Lucas were passed out in Mike's living room, Will and Maggie sat at the kitchen table with the only other couple in the house. Eleven was swaying slightly, keeping her hands in her lap and trying to steady herself but failing. Eventually she just let her body lean into Mike's, and let her head rest on his shoulder.

"Thank you for letting me tag along," Maggie said to Mike. "Will wasn't so sure he should bring me. He may be just a tad embarrassed by you guys," she joked playfully, glancing over at Will. He was so shy. It was part of what attracted her to him. For once, she didn't feel like a guy only wanted her for a night and nothing more.

"I am, too," Mike chuckled, putting his arm around Eleven to let her lean against his side more comfortably. He rubbed her shoulder with his thumb. "No, they're not so bad. It's just that they're getting ready to go back to college again, and they wanted one more night of drunken stupidity with me and Will before they left."

"It must be nice, having childhood friends." Maggie smiled a bit at Eleven as her eyes fluttered closed. She really shouldn't have let them make her drink so much. "I never had that luxury."

"Well, you can now," Will told her, and she smiled even more. "I'm glad you came."

"I'm glad Will finally has a woman in his life," Mike added, grinning over at his long time friend. "He spent so much time being sick, he never bothered trying. I think you're going to be good for him, Maggie. Just treat him well."

"Yes," Eleven muttered sleepily, her eyes still close. "Or I'll ki-

"You'll do nothing because you need sleep," Mike cut her off quickly. Maggie surely wouldn't be too fond of being threatened even if Eleven was drunk and half conscious. He stood, pulling her up with him. He turned and lifted her onto his back, bringing her legs around his waist.

"I guess that's our cue, then," Maggie sighed, standing up as well. Will followed suit, then led the way towards the door, Maggie close behind. "It was nice to meet y'all. Properly, that is."

"You, too. Drive safe you guys," Mike called to them as they left. He piggybacked Eleven to the bedroom, laying her down gently and bringing the blanket up over her. It had been a long night, and he was eager to jump into bed with El and sleep for the next twelve hours.

---

Maggie paused outside of the door to her tiny one bedroom apartment. Will stood there awkwardly on her doorstep, hands shoved into his pockets.

"Well, I had a wonderful evening, Mr. Byers. You were a perfect gentleman." She watched his expression carefully. He was so nervous, it was cute. "How should we say goodbye?" She asked him curiously.

"What do you mean?" His eyes widened a bit. She giggled at his innocent nature, then stepped up to him. She reached around to rest her hand on the back of his neck, tangling her thin fingers in his shaggy brown hair.

"Surely you didn't plan to leave me here without so much as a goodnight kiss?" She stood on her toes a bit to get closer to him, to his lips. Will brought his slightly shaky hands up to rest on her hips. Not caring to wait for him to make the move any longer, Maggie closed the already shrinking gap between them and pressed her lips to his.

They were soft, but a little clumsy as first, not that she minded. Mike had said before that his illness or whatever it was kept him from pursuing women, but she didn't care. Whatever he didn't know, she could teach him. He was too cute and too kind to let go of.

Will eventually found the rhythm he needed for the kiss. He followed her movements, matched them in order to adapt to the kiss. He could hardly believe he was kissing a girl.

It reminded him of his childhood, growing up without anything more than crushes he would never talk to. How the kids in school thought he wasn't into girls just because he didn't chase skirts like all the other high school boys. It was hard for Will to think of anything other than the slugs and the Upside Down. Things like relationships and sex seemed like things he would never have.

"Mm, you're a quick learner," she smirked as he pulled back. "That's good. Sweet dreams, Will Byers. Drive safe. Call me whenever you want to go out again." She kissed his cheek softly, then waved as she made her way into the apartment. She closed the door, and Will heard the lock click.

For a long time, he stood there completely dumbfounded. She had been so amazing as moving those lips, those perfect, plump, pink lips. He could still feel the fluttering in his chest and he felt so light that he may have just drifted off with the wind.

With a big goofy grin plastered on his face, Will made his way back to Johnathan's beat up old car and drove off towards home, wondering if he should have asked to go inside with her. There was so much he could hardly wait to try, and if Maggie was a willing teacher, he would be her star student.

## 22. Chapter 22

Hey guys! In case you didnt see, I started the new story :) yes, I know it starts off with a dilemma, but I assure you it is a Mileven fic so no worries ;) anyways! Time for more of this story! Hope you enjoy the chapter :) also a quick thank you again to all of you. You are the most amazing reviewers Ive ever had. I love getting feedback from you guys because you leave me such helpful and amazing reviews. So thank you! This story is for you guys as is the other one :D

---

Chapter 22:

Johnathan peppered playful kisses over Nancy's stomach before lifting his lips to hers. It didn't seem like all that long ago Nancy thought she'd be raising this kid all by herself. It seemed like it was growing so fast. Her stomach grew a little more every week.

"I got a phone call from Steve today," Nancy said because she felt like she needed to tell him. Johnathan sat back to look her in the eyes, brow furrowed in concerned. "It wasn't... bad or anything. He congratulated us."

"That's good, I guess," Johnathan shrugged his shoulder. He didn't have much else to say. There was a time once when Johnathan hated Steve with every fiber of his being. However, Steve wasn't the asshole he often pretended to be.

When they were trapped together in the lab, Johnathan forgave Steve for a lot of what happened when Nancy and Johnathan rekindled their friendship. Then again, Johnathan understood that he wouldn't have reacted calmly if Steve suddenly came back into Nancy's life and she started to pull away from him.

"He sounded... miserable," Nancy frowned, the empathy clear in her eyes. "Johnathan, maybe you should reach out to him. I think Steve could use a friend. After everything you went thr-"

"I'll go see him," he smiled softly, cutting her off. "You don't have to

convince me." He would do anything for Nancy, even if it was something he hated or something that would hurt him. She was and had been his whole world for a long time now.

They were going to be married, and they would have a child. He belonged totally and completely to her. He was utterly at her mercy.

"Thank you," she beamed in relief, reaching over to touch his cheek gently. "You really are amazing, Johnathan Byers."

"No," he shook his head. "I just love you."

"I love you, too," she grinned.

---

Mike hated that Dustin and Lucas were so far away once again. He understood that college was necessary, and he was glad that they had their lives on track. Sometimes Mike wondered if he made a mistake by staying in Hawkins instead of going to college with his friends. Then again, if he had left, he wouldn't have been there when Eleven returned.

Not to mention that Will would have been completely alone. He didn't have any other friends, and Mike was glad that he could be there for him. Everyone needed a friend, though now it seemed like Will found someone that could be more than a friend.

Unfortunately, it seemed his new relationship was going to come with a new load of problems to solve. New enemies to face.

Mike had been lounging on the couch with Eleven, watching some cartoons she took an interest in. She was sitting beside him with eggos on a small plate. He smiled over at her as she scarfed them down bite by bite. He never would understand her obsession with the little round waffles.

The phone rang, and Eleven looked over at Mike. He hesitated for a moment, comfortable where he was, but eventually let out a sigh and pushed off the arm of the sofa. He walked past El, ruffling her hair playfully as he passed her, his fingers almost getting caught in her messy curls.

As soon as he answered the phone, he could hear Will's panic. He was breathing hard, like he'd been running, but Mike knew he hyperventilated whenever he was really upset and in a frenzy. Concern took over in that moment.

"Will?"

"Mike, I need your help. I don't know what to do," Will answered, speaking quickly. If Mike hadn't been friends with him for so long, he may not have understood what he said.

"Alright, what is it?"

"It's Maggie," Will said a little slower, like he was trying to calm down so he could communicate better. "She's got this ex, and he keeps bugging her, and she called to tell me he was at her house. She sounded scared, and she hung up before I could ask her anything more."

"You think he's going to hurt her?" Mike asked, whispering so that Eleven didn't hear. The last thing he needed was for Eleven to get upset and go kill the guy.

"I dont know, but please come get me. Please take me to her place," Will begged. Mike looked over at Eleven, wondering what excuse he'd give her.

"Okay, Will. Just... calm down. I'll grab my keys and head your way. Okay? Take some deep breaths, Im sure she's fine. I'll be there soon."

"Okay. Hurry."

Mike hung up the phone carefully, trying to maintain that everything was alright. He walked back into the living room with Eleven.

"Hey, Will needs a ride to his girlfriends house. I'll be right back, okay?" He reached for the keys he left in the coffee table. Eleven stood, setting her plate doen where the keys had been.

"I'll come."

"No, El, I should go alone," he said calmly. "I think Will wants some

time for guy talk. This is his first time being in a relationship. It'll be more embarrassing for him if you come. Just stay here for me. Okay?" She was reluctant to obey, but in the end she nodded and sat back down. "I wont be long."

Mike leaned down to kiss the top of her head, then he headed out of the front door. He drove slowly from the driveway just in case Eleven was watching him leave. She did that sometimes, and he knew if he sped off she'd be worried. He didn't want her to worry.

---

After Mike picked Will up from his house, he did his best to convince Will it was all okay, and that he was sure it was a misunderstanding. Maggie was a capable woman, Mike reassured him, and she could take care of herself.

However, as they pulled up, they could clearly hear yelling from inside. Mike started to get a little worried, and Will was ready for another panic attack.

Will wanted to protect her, *needed* to protect her, but he had been sick for so long. His body was still weak, still recovering from the abuse it took from the slugs and eggs. He knew that he wasn't physically strong enough himself to defend Maggie. That was why he called Mike.

They got out of the car, and Mike led the way up to the door. He didn't bother knocking, and chose instead to just go ahead and push through the door. The sooner they could get to Maggie, the better. The yelling stopped as the door opened.

There was a man there, a man a little bit older than Mike and Will, maybe by a few years. He was tall and thin and wore a beat up leather jacket. Maggie did look frightened, and a little bit of relief washed over her face when she saw Will.

"Is that him?" The man asked Maggie, pointing at Mike.

"No, that's Mike. My friend," she answered with a frown. She walked over to them and stepped to Will's side, taking his hand in hers. "John, you need to leave. Now." The man, who they assumed was

called John, snorted at her.

"You're leaving me for some boy?"

"He's the same age as me, and he's no boy," she shot back angrily. "Now get out of my house, John. You're not welcome here anymore." John took a step towards Will and Maggie, but Mike side-stepped to stand in his way.

"What, she fucking you, too, kid? I never believed it when they told me the bitch got around, but maybe they were right."

Mike had every intention of keeping his cool. He planned to retrieve Maggie and leave without causing a scene, since he worked for the police department. However, he couldn't stop himself from reacting to John's harsh words. He threw a heavy punch into the man's jaw, which sent him stumbling back and falling to the ground.

"She said leave. Unless you want to have this conversation down at the station, I suggest you do as she asks. You're not from around here, so maybe you don't know, but Hawkins takes care of its own." He stood firmly as John got to his feet.

"You a cop, kid?"

"Yeah. I can have Sheriff Hopper here in minutes. Hes also a family friend of Maggie's. I bet he'd love to know what you're doing in his town, harassing someone he cares about."

"Whatever," John seethed, stepped around Mike to get to the door. "Your loss, Maggie. Don't come running back with you get bored of your new boyfriend." He slammed her front door once he was outside. Mike turned to Maggie and Will.

"What an asshole."

"He didn't used to be," Maggie shrugged. "He started drinking after his ma passed away. Not much I could do to save him so I left when he got violent."

"Did he hurt you?" Will asked her immediately. She looked up at him with a soft smile and shook her head,

"No, you rescued me just in time, I guess."

"Well, how about we head back to my place for now, have a few drinks and something to eat," Mike suggested, fishing his keys from his pocket. Maggie clung to Will's arm.

"I say let's do it."

## 23. Chapter 23

Hey guys! Im sorry im so late with these updates. I got busy over the weekend, then had work for the past two days and work just tired my brain out lol but im off today so Im going to try to get all my stories updated :) if not all today, the rest will be tomorrow. Thank you for being patient and sticking with me! Enjoy!

---

### Chapter 23:

Mike walked alongside Will as the younger boy shopped around for clothes and things he needed at home. Part of being healthy again was starting a life for himself finally. He'd called up Mike the day before and asked him to take him into town. Being with Maggie prompted Will to update his wardrobe a little.

Mike figured it was a good thing that Will wanted to do all these things for himself. He had a real shot at normalcy, and Mike would have done anything to help him get it. Maggie was the first big step towards a new life. Apparently clothes were next.

"Johnathan is teaching me to drive," Will told Mike excitedly. "Im going to get my license, then Johnathan is going to buy Lonnie's old car for me. Ill finally be able to drive myself places so I dont have to bother other people."

"You never bothered us," Mike reassured his friend with a soft chuckle. "We understood, and I know I definitely never minded giving you a ride." He briefly wondered when Will stopped started calling his dad by his first name like Johnathan did.

"Still," Will shrugged, that smile never fading one bit. "I get to stop being stuck in this... rut. I can grow up and start being an adult like everyone else that doesn't need to be taken care of." Mike knew that Will hated being a burden, and he felt like he had been ever since he was rescued from the Upside Down, even if no one else thought the same way.

"So," Mike cleared his throat, wanting to talk about something more lighthearted. He hated when Will talked about how much he hated who he was. Mike and the others loved Will always, even when he was weak and sick. He was their friend. "You and Maggie."

"What about us?" Will asked with a furrowed brow.

"Have you," Mike smirked a little, "you know?" Will's cheeks lit up in embarrassment when he realized what Mike was talking about. He quickly shook his head, brown hair falling over his eyes until he pushed it to the side again. "Why not?"

"Because I've never... I wont know what to do."

"Sure you will. It's not difficult," Mike shrugged. "Remember those old skinflicks you told us that Johnathan had under his bed when he was a teenager? It's the same idea, if you ever watched them." He laughed a little at how hard Will was blushing.

"She knows how it's suppose to be, though, and I don't. I feel like I'm at a disadvantage, and I dont like it." He shook his head. "I'm afraid to disappoint her and chase her off. Maggie is... the best thing to happen to me in a long time, Mike."

"I know. I can't exactly show you how it's done, but... I bet she can. Maggie seems like a nice girl. I think she'll understand if you just tell her your concerns. She can show you exactly what to do." Mike raised an eyebrow at Will. "Don't you want to?"

"Of course I do," Will sighed. "It's... It makes me nervous."

"You shouldnt be, it'll be fine." Almost as soon as the words left Mike's lips, they stepped into the parking lot and saw Maggie's ex, John, and two other guys lingering around Mike's car. Frustrated by their presence, Mike put a hand out to stop Will, then stalked over to his car.

"Oh, there he is," John sighed as Mike approached. "We were just looking for you, kid." Mike stood firmly, shoving his hands into his pockets.

"Were you ashamed after you got your ass beat last time, so you had

to bring friends?" Mike scoffed at him. "It might help you now, but it won't fix your pride. Three on one seems a little unfair." John took a threatening step towards Mike. Will watched on in fear, briefly wondering when Mike became so confident and sarcastic in the face of bullies. Will envied him for it.

"You suckerpunched me, you little shit," John said through his teeth. Mike chuckled a bit, which only infuriated John more.

"I don't know how you can suckerpunch someone directly in front of them. Really, you should have seen it coming. You called my friend a whore after all.:

"She is," John scoffed. "She was before I even met her. Everyone tried to warn me."

"I dont care what she did before," Mike shrugged. "She's with my friend now, so you're not allowed to run your mouth about her." John stepped even closer, grabbing Mike by the collar. Mike didn't react, keeping his hands in his pockets and his expression stoic.

"I don't care if you're a cop," John seethed, "I'm settling this." John shoved Mike backwards, causing him to stumble. While he was off balance, John threw a punch that landed against Mike's cheek. He fell back, letting out a long groan.

"You complained about suckerpunches," Mike snorted, pushing himself upright. "Alright, fine." Will stepped out from behind the cars Mike left him at, catching John and company's attention.

"Well, well, well, if it isn't Maggie's new little boyfriend," John snickered. "Are you going to let your friend take all the punches for you?" Will started forwards, but Mike got up quickly and grabbed Will by the shoulders. He pushed him back and away from the fight that was about to break out.

"Go call Hop," Mike said quietly.

"But, Mike-"

"But nothing. Go call him, Will. I'll handle this." Reluctantly, Will did what Mike asked, hurrying back into the store to borrow their phone

and call the station to get Hopper.

Mike turned back to John, spitting some blood onto the pavement at John's feet. John swung again, enraged by Mike's stubborn defiance, but this time Mike was ready. He dodged to the left, missing the blow entirely, then delivered his own into John's ribs.

The other man let out a grunt, then stepped back, hand clutching his side now. His eyes were alight with fury as he glared at Mike. He waved his hand to his friends, and suddenly the three of them were surrounding Mike. Unafraid, Mike began throwing punches in each direction, even after taking hits from all over.

It wasn't a fair fight and Mike knew it. He could have taken on John without a problem, but he was no match for the three of them. It didn't matter if he won, though. All he wanted to do was distract them long enough for Will to get to the phone and call Hopper.

Sure enough, after several minutes of being beaten mercilessly and sneaking in his own punches here and there, Mike was relieved to hear the sound of Hoppers siren blaring behind them. John took a step back, wiping the blood from his mouth and putting his hands up. The other two men followed suit.

Hopper got out of the car and walked over to Mike, offering his hand and helping the poor kid to his feet. Mike started to dust himself off, spitting more blood onto the ground beneath him. Hopper frowned at Mike's split bottom lip and the bruise forming under his eye. Not to mention whatever bruises he couldn't see.

"Good thing I brought three pairs of handcuffs," Hopper sighed. He looked up at the older men that had been beating Mike. "Hands behind your backs, on your knees." Hopper got to work handcuffing each of the three men as Will came rushing out from the store.

"Mike, are you okay?" He asked frantically, looking his friend over.

"Yeah, they don't hit very hard," Mike chuckled. "My sister hits harder." He ran his tongue over the fresh wound on his bottom lip. "Eleven is going to hit even harder when she sees me like this." He sighed. "As long as you're alright."

"Mike, you shouldn't have to take a beating for my sake," Will frowned. Mike put a hand on his friends shoulder, watching with a smirk as Hopper shoved the three men into the tiny backseat of his car.

"You can have the next one, then," he teased Will. "For now, let's just get out of here."

"You alright, Wheeler?" Hopper asked before he got into the cruiser. Mike looked up and nodded,

"Yeah, I was just buying time. That's Maggie's asshole ex by the way. Don't go easy on him." Hopper looked at John in the backseat.

"I wont." He climbed into the drivers seat, started the car, then took off down the road. Mike let out a pained grunt, then staggered towards his car. Will frowned, wishing he had been tougher and helped Mike out. He got in on the passengers side.

"Can you take me to Maggie's instead of my house?"

"Sure. To Maggie's it is."

## 24. Chapter 24

### Chapter 24:

Mike was well aware of the drama that would ensue once he stepped through the door to his apartment. He had gotten into a pretty brutal fight hours earlier, and had spent a long time down at the station giving a statement with Will and Hopper. John was going to be locked up for awhile for assault, but Hopper wasn't going to keep him for more than a few days since Mike had hit John first not too many days before the fight.

Eleven was probably anxious enough already, since he didn't come home when he said he was going to. When she saw the bruises on his face, and the cut on his lip, she was most definitely going to be upset. More than upset, even.

Still, he had to put her fears to ease. He jammed his key into the door and pushed it open. Eleven came flying to him from the kitchen table, leaving behind the bowl of cereal she had made for herself. Without a word, or notice of his bumps and bruises, she wrapped her arms around his waist and laid her cheek flat against his chest.

"Oh, easy," Mike grunted as she squeezed him, his ribs and sides aching from the kicks he had endured. She stepped back to look up at him, and she finally noticed the marks on his face. Her eyes widened in concern as one of her delicate hands lifted to gently touch his bruised cheek.

"Mike?" She questioned, her fingertips ghosting over the skin under his eye. Mike grabbed her hand, bringing her knuckles to his lips briefly before lowering it away from his face entirely.

"I'm fine, El. It was just a scrap with some guys who wanted to pick on Will." He left out the details about Maggie, as he didn't want Eleven to know he was fighting Will's girlfriends battles for her. Eleven's concern for Mike far outweighed her concerns for Maggie.

"Mouthbreathers," she frowned, hugging his waist again, this time much gentler than before. "Can I help?"

"No," Mike sighed, rubbing her back gently. "There's nothing you can do without hurting anyone, so you shouldn't do anything. Trust me, if I couldn't handle it, I wouldn't have gotten myself into the situation. Plus Hopper came to help out. I wasn't on my own."

"I'll go... next time," she frowned, sitting back to look up at him again without letting go of him entirely. "I will keep you safe." Mike smiled down at her, lifting a hand to pat her head softly. She was so cute when she was being protective, he just couldn't help but adore the little pout on her lips. He kissed her head quickly.

"I should be the one keeping you safe. Either way, it's a guy thing. Defending honor and all. Will is too weak still to do it himself. He's just now starting to fill out some, instead of being so skinny like he was before. I wasn't going to let anyone put their hands on him. He needs to recover properly. That's all it was. I had to protect Will."

"I'll protect him, too," she whined. "You're hurt."

"It looks worse than it feels," he lied with a smirk, taking her hand into his. He stepped towards the table, pulling her along with him. "Come on, El. Finish your cereal. I'm fine, I promise." She didn't seem convinced, but she did as she was told and went back to eating her favorite chocolate flavored cereal. They were out, Mike noticed due to the box in the trash can, so he would have to pick some more up soon.

"I'm sorry I was gone so long," he said after a few moments of silence. "I didn't plan to be. I had to go down to the station to take care of some things with Hopper. He had paperwork to do, and we had to give our statements."

"Statements?" Eleven repeated with a cheekfull of cereal. Mike chuckled at that, shaking his head at her a little. She was too damn cute sometimes.

"It means we had to tell Hopper exactly what happened, and he wrote it all down. It's just something you have to do when you call the police. It's for a good reason." He leaned forward on his elbows so he could be a little closer to her.

He liked watching her even while she did the most mundane things. Her movements were always a little sloppy, compared to everyone else since she learned things later in life. It wasn't all natural to her like it was for most. It was an endearing quality, he thought, and always made her so interesting to him.

"I'm off tomorrow, and I have no plans. It will be you, me, the couch, and some cheesy old movies you haven't seen yet." He laid his hand over her arm, brushing his thumb over the skin there gently. She grinned over at him, chewing up the bite of cereal she still had in her mouth. "Does that sound good then?" He asked.

"Sounds perfect."

---

Will sat on his front porch for a long while before Johnathan came out to check on him. Johnathan had noticed Will's sour mood ever since he came home from shopping with Mike, but he hadn't said anything to anyone about what might have upset him.

Worried about his brother, Johnathan decided to go out and sit on the steps by his brother. For a moment he was quiet, making sure Will wasn't going to chase him off or asked to be alone. Once he was sure he was welcome on the porch with Will, Johnathan decided it was a good time to go ahead and start prying some.

"What's bothering you so bad?" He asked curiously, looking over at Will. He was silent for a moment, not really wanting to admit the truth to Johnathan. Eventually, Will decided that maybe Johnathan was the best person to talk to about these kinds of things. After all, the older brother was usually the one younger brothers went to for advice.

"Do you know how to fight?" Will spoke after a little bit more silence. Johnathan was caught off guard by the question.

"Why?"

"Well, because..." Will groaned a little, feeling a bit embarrassed about the situation. "Because some asshole keeps bothering Maggie, and I can't help her. I've never been in a fight before. What do I do?"

"Well try to avoid it if you can," Johnathan told him quickly. "Fighting isn't something you should rush into. It's an impulsive thing I know." He thought briefly about the first fight he had ever been in, when he and Steve got into it over the insults directed at Nancy when they were teenagers. "It doesn't really solve anything. Just gets you into trouble."

"But if I had to. If... he swung first."

"Who's he?" Johnathan pushed, hoping he could help Will in some way. Of course, as his big brother, Johnathan would throw down with anyone who went after Will.

"It doesn't matter. I don't want anyone else fighting my battles for me," Will frowned. "I want to be able to defend myself, to defend Maggie. Can't you teach me how? You've been in fights before. Can you just tell me what I have to do?"

"I guess I could, but Mom would have my head if I helped you get into a fight with someone. You know how protective she is of you."

"I know, but that's exactly what I mean," Will grumbled. "Everyone thinks they have to protect me all of the time. Because they did before when I was sick. They had to then, but not now. I want to be able to protect myself, and the people I love. I want to be... like you and Mike and Dustin and Lucas. I want people to see me as strong, not weak."

"That's easy. Become stronger. Eat healthy, do some exercises, get into shape. It's good for you." Johnathan didn't have any training or anything to offer Will. He got into fights blindly, and in most cases the adrenaline and anger did all the work for him. "People love you either way," Johnathan added. "You don't have to prove yourself."

"I know I don't have to, but I want to. And I will." Maggie was a chance at a fresh start for Will. She was his opportunity to be normal, to experience love and relationships like everyone around him had been doing for awhile. He wanted to protect and preserve that. To protect Maggie. He couldn't do that if he was weak. "I'll prove myself."

"Take it easy, Will," Johnathan told him, putting a hand on his

shoulder. "Make sure you heal and recover first. Then focus on other stuff. You have your whole life ahead of you. Do what you want to do, but do it for the right reasons. Okay?"

"Okay," Will nodded.

## 25. Chapter 25

Hey guys! So I finally figured out how I wanted to do this chapter. I know its going to be a little different organizationally but I hope you guys enjoy it anyways :) your awesome reviews are so very appreciated, I hope you know that!

---

Chapter 25:

Mike was looking at his face in the mirror, dabbing an alcohol swab lightly at the split in his lip and other areas that may need it. He winced a little each time, but he knew it would be better in the long run. The sooner his injuries heal, the sooner he can get back to work. Hopper gave him a few days off to "recover," even though Mike tried to tell him he didn't need any time off.

Before he could finish, two thin arms wrapped around his waist, and he felt Eleven's form press into his back. Mike set down the swab and stood upright, laying a hand over one of her arms. He smiled down at it a bit before turning in her arms so he could look down at her.

"Is everything okay?" He asked her, brushing her hair from her face. Eleven looked up at him in return, and without a word, she nodded her head. "Do you need something then? Are you hungry or thirsty or..." Mike trailed off as her arms dropped from his waist, and instead her hands came around to take his bruised face in between her hands gently.

Eleven pushed herself up onto her toes, and she kissed him softly. He was aware of what she wanted then, as her tongue brushed over his and her legs shook from holding herself up to kiss him for so long. Mike bent down a little, hoisting her up by her thighs. Eleven instinctively curled her legs around his hips to make holding her easier.

Never taking his lips from hers, Mike nudged the bathroom door open with his foot and walked her into the bedroom. He turned and sat on the edge of the bed so that she was sitting in his lap. His hands slid up underneath her shirt to move along her spine.

---

Maggie carried in a cup of coffee for Will. She had invited him over to check on him, and to apologize for what happened. She couldn't help but feel like the whole incident was her fault. She was young and stupid when she began seeing John, and she regretted it ever since. However, it wasn't Will's problem, and he shouldn't have been involved.

After setting the mug down on the coffee table, Maggie sat next to Will on the sofa, laying her hands in her lap. Will picked up the cup and sipped it lightly before setting it down again and turning to face her.

"Maggie, I know this is a very rude question, but I..." He dropped his gaze, his cheeks flushing. "Were you with... a lot of people before me? You know... intimately?" His eyebrows furrowed, and his face burned with shame for having asked her something so invasive.

"You really shouldn't listen to John," she frowned. Maggie took a deep breath before answering him properly. "I was with a few guys before you, but not as many as John thinks. Most of it was just rumors. Some guys I dated told everyone they slept with me after I stopped seeing them, but I only slept with two of them. Then John. So... I've been intimate with three guys."

"Three," he nodded, happy with that answer after making up wildly high numbers in his head. John made it seem like she had slept with numerous guys, more than she could count. He was a little relieved to hear that his worries were unwarranted.

"Do you think I'm easy, then?" She asked, looking down at her lap. "Because of those guys..." Will's head shot up to look at her again. He leaned forward and took her hands in his tightly.

"No! Not at all. I think John is an asshole, and you were too good for all those guys anyways." He smiled at her. "I think you're great, Maggie. I really do."

"So..." She leaned closer and put a hand on his thigh. "If I told you that... I wanted to be intimate with you... would you think I'm easy?"

"No," he said a little softer than before, his eyes locked onto that hand on his thigh. It slid up slowly, creeping towards a place that had not been touched by someone else before. "I want... I want it, too." Maggie hovered over him now, slowly leading him onto his back. She tugged his tee shirt up with one hand, then slid her hand under the band of his jeans.

---

Once he'd pulled her shirt from her body, Mike began kissing her breasts, all over, hands gripping her sides tightly. Her head fell back, hair tickling her spine as she took deep breaths to steady herself. Mike was too good with his lips; it wasn't fair.

Mike stood with her in his arms still, then moved to the wall adjacent to him. Eleven let out a small gasp as her bare torso made contact with the cold wall. Mike's hands moved down to grip her thighs again, a little harder this time. She could feel where each of his fingertips dug into her skin, but she didn't mind it one bit.

"Mike," she breathed as he kissed and nipped gently at her throat and collarbone. "Please..."

"Mm. Always so eager," Mike hummed, looking into her eyes. She blushed, but nodded her head in agreement. "Okay. I won't make you wait anymore." He kissed her passionately, then pulled her from the wall and carried her back to the bed. He set her down, then laid back on the mattress, sitting up on his elbows slightly. He grinned at her. "If you want it, take it."

---

Will couldn't stop the groan that escaped him as her fingers closed around him. He could feel himself hardening at her touch, not that he wasn't aroused from the moment she got close to him. She squeezed his length a little, drawing another gasp from him.

After a moment, she retrieved her hand so she could pop his button loose. Maggie pushed down his zipper, then slid off the couch, onto her knees beside him. She encouraged him to sit up and turn so that he was facing her where he was sitting.

"Just relax," she said softly, noting the way his chest rose and fell

rapidly. "Just sit back and breathe." Tucking her hair behind her ear, Maggie leaned forward and put her lips around the tip of his member. She knew she needed to start slowly, especially since it was his first time.

Will's eyes shut tightly as he bit back another moan. It was all new to him, and all oh so pleasant. He couldn't stop the small whimper he let out when her lips slid down further, and she took most of his length in her mouth.

"Maggie," he sighed, hands grabbing the edge of the sofa so tightly that his knuckles turned white. "I... I feel so..." He bit into his bottom lip as he felt her warm tongue scale the side of his member, from base to tip. She was very good at what she was doing, and he wondered if he should be happy about it or concerned.

Maggie stood and wiped her lips with her thumb. She grabbed his hands in hers, then brought them to her hips. Once there, Maggie used her grip on his wrists to lift his hands under her shirt, sliding them up along her stomach, to her breasts. He closed his hands around them, the feeling of his hands against her bare skin exciting him more.

---

Eleven lowered herself onto Mike once she'd undone his jeans. Inch by inch, she took him in, until she was sitting on his hips without any space between them. Her eyes were closed, lips slightly parted as she panted heavily.

"You can do this," he encouraged her, rubbing her thighs with his hands. "I showed you, remember? I showed you how." She looked at him for a moment, cheeks flush, then nodded. She knew what to do, but she was a little afraid of doing it wrong.

Slowly, at first, she began to move her hips against him, back and forth. Each time, she could feel him push against her insides, stretching her, drawing moans from her plump lips. Mike was panting now as well, the pleasure rolling up from his pelvic region, to his gut, to his chest. He could feel it all over, that arousal deep within him.

Though he wanted to see her do it on her own, he couldn't stop his hands from moving up to grab her hips. He helped her move them, directing them how he wanted to, wanting nothing more than to hit all the right spots for her, while finding a rhythm for himself.

"Ah, Mike," she moaned his name, her head falling forward and hands pressing into his bare chest. Her fingers curled a little, and Mike sort of liked the way her nails dug into his skin, leaving little indents that he could see each time they situated differently.

"Harder," he breathed, grip tightening on her hips. "Eleven."

---

Maggie hiked up her skirt, throwing her legs over his so she was straddling him. Holding his member in place, she lowered herself onto it, stopping once the tip breached her walls. She held it there, watching his reaction.

Will was already feeling the intense pleasure of being inside of her, even with only an inch of him inside. He was breathing even harder now, chest heaving, eyes fluttering open and closed rapidly. He was hardening even more.

"Are you ready?" She asked as she gently ran a hand through his hair. Will nodded up at her, sliding his hands up her sides, then dropping them to her legs again.

"Yes."

"I'll start slow," she reassured him, lowering her body until every last inch was buried within her. Will groaned loudly, unable to help himself. His hand flew up in embarrassment to cover his mouth. Maggie quickly pulled his hand away, replacing it with her own lips.

"It's okay," she promised. "We're alone. Don't be shy, Will." She lifted her hips again, then dropped down onto his lap. Soon, she was repeating this in a rhythm, and it was driving Will crazy. He imagined sex would feel good, but he didn't think it would be that good. It was so tight inside of her, he wondered how he fit.

Suddenly, a feeling began to build in his gut, something he knew but

not to this extent, this intensity. His breaths quickened, turning into rapid, shallow pants. His hold on her tightened.

"Oh, Maggie," he groaned as that feeling exploded within him. He wrapped his arms around her, hugging her tightly as his body shook and tensed all over. Maggie held his head against her chest, stroking her hair as his aftershocks rippled through him.

"Did it feel good?" Will pulled back to look up at her, smiling,

"It felt amazing. You're amazing." He kissed her shoulder, then flopped back against the couch in exhaustion. She giggled a little, then slid off his lap to curl up beside him. "We should do that again... soon."

"Slow down, cowboy," she grinned. "We have to recover."

"I'm recovered," he smirked, turning to lead her back on the couch. "I'll recover soon anyways." He began kissing her again. Maggie wondered if he would really be ready to go so soon, but she kind of hoped he would.

---

Surprisingly, it was Mike who gave in first. His orgasm was sudden and powerful. Eleven loved the noises that came from him during it, and she kept him inside as he convulsed underneath her. Once it was done, she rolled to the side and laid beside him.

"I'm sorry," he panted, one hand on his chest and the other on the bed beside him. "I don't know why I couldn't hold it in."

"It's a good thing," she shrugged, rolling onto her side to face him. "I liked it." Mike chuckled at that, knowing that they both only cared about the pleasure that the other felt. They were selfless lovers, and it worked out perfectly.

"I guess you just felt too good to hold back." He looked over at her, and she brushed her fingertips over the bruise on his stomach. "It doesn't hurt much, El. Don't worry so much."

"I worry... no matter what. Because I love you." She frowned a bit. Mike leaned closer to kiss her forehead, grabbing her hand and

holding it against his chest.

"I know. I love you, too."

Eleven scooted closer and laid her head on his chest. She closed her eyes, holding him gently so as not to hurt him. It wasnt too long before she fell asleep, breathing softly against his bare torso. Mike admired her for a little while, stroking her hair, before falling asleep himself.

## 26. Chapter 26

### Chapter 26:

Will woke the next morning in Maggie's bed, where he had spent the night. He hadn't meant to fall sleep there, but it didn't feel like a big deal when he thought about the events of the night before. The bed was still messy from all of the activities they engaged in together.

It was the smell of coffee and bacon that pried him from her soft, warm bed that smelled just like her. He sat up with a groan and stretched his arms over his head, yawning a little as the sleep began to fade away entirely.

After a few minutes of drinking in his surroundings, Will crawled out of the bed, tugged his jeans on, then wandered out into the kitchen of her little one bedroom apartment in search of Maggie, as well as the source of those delicious aromas.

However, when he stepped out into the kitchen, she was nowhere to be seen. His brow furrowed as he looked around, stepping back into the hallway to check the bathroom. She wasn't in any room that he could see.

The skillet was still on the stove, the bacon burnt. There was a cup of coffee still steaming on the counter, so she had to have just been there. Will figured maybe she stepped out to the mailboxes down the street, or maybe she was in the backyard.

After a little more investigating, he discovered she wasn't outside either. In fact, her car was in the driveway, and by the front door, her purse was hanging from the coat rack. There was no reason to think she left, but she most definitely wasn't in the house anymore.

"Maggie!" He called her name, a little frantic now as the memories of his own disappearance crept into his thoughts. There was no way Maggie was taken by the demogorgon. After the surgery, they were supposed to leave him alone.

He began searching more, checking cabinets and closets, leaving no

stones unturned. It was during this search that he found something concerning.

In the bottom drawer of her freezer, there was a petri dish with several of the demogorgon eggs, and even a partial slug. He recognized them immediately, having spent years vomiting up such things. He pulled them out of the freezer, then stormed outside.

In a panic, Will crossed the road and threw the little dish as far as he could into the woods. She shouldn't have kept them. The demogorgons wanted those eggs, wanted to save them. Maggie couldn't keep them without putting herself at risk.

"Maggie!" He screamed into the woods, panting heavily. He turned a few times, looking around, his chest heaving with breaths he couldn't steady or control. He felt lightheaded, felt anxious as he had every time the past came back to haunt him. "Damn it, Maggie, don't do this to me!"

He stayed for a moment longer, then ran back to the house, flinging the front door open and not even bothering to close it behind him as he hurried to her landline. Mike's number was one of the few he remembered, just because he had to call it so often.

Will called Mike first, begging him to have Eleven search for Maggie. Mike agreed to tell Eleven to look, and Will hung up immediately after he was sure. While Eleven went searching, Will planned to drive down to the station to get Hopper. Wherever Maggie was, they would find her. Will refused to just let her vanish like so many others.

---

Mike sat on the edge of the bed, elbows on bouncing knees, and he waited impatiently for Eleven to return from that dark place. It bothered him to ask her to go back, but the panic in Will's voice told him it was urgent. Maggie was missing, and they had to do everything they could to find her.

After a few minutes, Eleven sat up with a deep breath and small whimper. She lifted one small hand to her head, then dropped it to her side once she was steady. Mike turned and slid closer to her, putting a gentle hand on her shoulder.

"El, are you okay?"

"Yes," she nodded slowly. "Maggie... I can't find her." Eleven let out a long breath. "I need the bath."

"No, El. I'm not taking you there again. We'll find her. I promise. Without the bath." Eleven didn't seem convinced, but she nodded anyways. Eleven not being able to find her was neither good nor bad. Sometimes, reaching into that place without lab help would fail. She wasn't perfect, nor was she always able to find those lost in the dark.

"Maybe we should meet Will and Hopper down at the station. I'm sure we should start with human possibilities. Like her asshole ex." He pushed himself up from the bed, running a hand through his messy black, loose curls. They were still wet from the shower he was taking before he heard the phone ringing. Eleven had been in there with him, on her knees, and the two of them didn't even have time to dry off before they were thrown into more trouble.

Mike moved to the dresser to dig out clothes for the both of them. He tossed a pair of shorts and a tee shirt to El, then dug out pants and a shirt for himself. They wasted no time getting dressed, and once they were ready, Mike took El by the hand and led her out to the car.

It didn't take long to tell that something was wrong, even from the small parking lot of the police station. Two cars were sitting outside with the lights on, red and blue blinding passerbys and telling them to stay away.

Mike parked where he could, eyes darting around in hopes of finding someone, someone he recognized. He wanted to find Hopper and Will above all.

"Stay in the car," he told Eleven, leaning over towards the dashboard in front of El. He popped open the glove compartment, then pulled out the small revolver Hopper had given him to self defense purposes. When Mike started working at the station as the dispatcher, Hopper insisted on teaching him how to shoot and unload and reload a gun.

Mike didn't mind. It came in handy a couple times since then, and

even if he wasn't a cop, he had a gun and knew how to use it. That was worth plenty.

After climbing out of the car, Mike closed the door and walked between the two police cars, gun at his side. So far, he didn't see anyone, which was concerning. Keeping a steady hand, he approached the station, then pushed through the double doors.

"Hopper?" He called out immediately, looking around. There was no blood, no bodies, which gave him a little bit of ease. At least it wasn't a sudden and brutal slaughter of any kind. "Hop? Will?" He cleared the front rooms, then headed back to the offices.

The longer he was surrounded by silence, the more nervous he became. Mike paused outside of Hopper's office, and that's when the smell of something sickeningly familiar hit his nose. He pushed open the door, and two of the newer deputies were lying dead in Hopper's office, one in the chair, slumped over the desk, and the other propped up against the wall underneath the window. Both had been shot twice in the chest.

"Fuck," Mike cursed under his breath, pulling the door closed. As awful a thought as it was, at least Hopper wasn't there. He could still be safe, alive. Mike started back out of the police station when he bumped into someone. Mike was prepared to fight for his life, but he quickly, fortunately, realized who it was.

"Mike," came Will's shaky voice. "What the hell happened here?"

"I don't know," Mike looked at the ground, thinking about where they had gone and what could have transpired in the station. "We need to leave." He put the gun in the back of his waistband, then grabbed Will by the arm and rushed him out of the police station.

Mike froze once he was outside, eyebrows furrowing as he realized his car was now empty. He looked around in search of Eleven.

"Wait, where's El?"

"El?"

"She was supposed to wait in the car," Mike groaned in frustration.

"She's gone."

"She wasn't there when I got here," Will told him honestly. "Let's just check around, maybe she saw something she went to look at." They split up and started looking for Eleven, or for anyone alive that might be able to tell them what happened.

They found nothing, no one. Will and Mike were both in a frenzy now, panicking, desperate to find the women they loved, and their friend, Hopper, who had mysteriously gone missing like the rest of them. Something was wrong, very wrong, and Mike wasn't sure what to do this time. People couldn't just vanish. They either ran, or they were taken. Either way, they had to be found.

## 27. Chapter 27

Hey guys! Sorry for the wait :) ive been trying to figure out exactly what I want to do and how I want to do it. This story is going to be ending after 30 chapters or so, instead of 40 this time. I feel if I make it too much longer, the waits will be longer and the quality wouldnt be as good so I figure its better to find a proper ending, and that is what Ive been trying to do lol again, im super sorry :) lets get to the finish line together. Enjoy!

---

### Chapter 27:

Eleven heard her scream, she was sure of it. It felt like an echo in her head, the aftermath of cry for help as it bounced off the trees and reached her ears. While she knew it was better to wait for Mike, that scream sounded like one of pain, of gutwrenching fear. There was no time to wait.

She moved through the trees, letting that instinct in her stomach push her to where she needed to go. Eleven had seen the monsters open doorways in the forest, in the trunks of massive oak trees. One of them was still open, she could feel it in her bones. Her connection to this other world, this Upside Down, was going to help her find and save Maggie. She was sure of it.

As expected, there was an opening, but it was closing quickly. Eleven had no time to rethink, or to consider running back to Mike to let him know what she had found, what she had heard. A decision had to be made in that moment, so she crouched low and crawled through.

The Upside Down was as stale, humid, and sticky as she remembered it being. It was a place she had spent much time in, a place she wanted to be done with forever. A soft whimper met her ears, leading her to where she expected she would find Maggie.

After awhile of fruitless searching, Eleven saw the woman in the distance, curled up against a large tree, hugging her knees. Her feet picked up a little speed, rushing to the girl as quickly as possible.

Eleven knelt down in front of her, and Maggie lifted her head in surprise.

"It's okay," Eleven tried to reassure her. "It's okay." Thats what Mike always told her when she was scared. It helped a little, even when she knew it wasn't true. Maybe she could offer that same temporary comfort to Maggie.

"Eleven? What are you doing here?" She whimpered. Eleven ignored her question when Maggie's bloodied palm caught her attention. Eleven's brow furrowed, and she lifted Maggie's hand away. Under her arm, Maggie had a wound on her side, then one under her hand on her thigh. She was bleeding dangerously, even Eleven knew it was too much blood.

"Maggie..."

"You need to go," Maggie told her. "You need to get out of here, Eleven. I cant run like this. I cant leave with you."

"No," Eleven refused. "You can."

"Eleven, please," Maggie cried in desperation. "Im a nurse, Eleven. I know what my body can take. If I push myself, I'll make the bleeding worse. I have to stay here and keep pressure on it. Find help, if you want to, but don't stay here. Get Hopper."

"I said no." Eleven stood, then bent over to pull Maggie. A shout escaped Maggie's lips as pain shot through her at the movements. As much as Eleven wanted to use her powers to carry Maggie out, she knew she couldnt hold her that long and defend them against monsters. Instead, Eleven held her with her own strength.

Maggie tore off part of her tee shirt, then tied it tightly around her upper thigh, just above the gash below it. It would slow the bleeding, but not stop it. As for her side, her only option was to continue to keep pressure on it, as much as she could anyways.

Eleven allowed Maggie to put her weight against her shoulder, and once Maggie was at least sort of stable, she began struggling her way towards where she could feel another gate, in the direction of the lab.

Maggie was on borrowed time, and if Eleven didn't move fast, even she knew Maggie wouldn't make it out with her.

---

The only place that Mike and Will knew to go was the lab. It was the way into the Upside Down if the demogorgons took them, and it was the way to get to the men in charge of the lab, if they were responsible. It seemed like their only option.

Hopper's personal revolver was still in his desk, so Mike handed it over to Will. The gun was heavy and cold in Will's hand, but he gripped it tightly, prepared to use it if he had to in order to rescue Eleven and Maggie.

Mike didn't care about speeding, didn't care about what cops might still be out on duty. Surely, they were more concerned with the silence on the radios than speeding cars. Mike had the pedal presses into the floor, his panic weighing down his foot without concern for the dangers of driving recklessly.

They reached the lab quickly, and the two boys practically leaped out of the vehicle to run towards the entrance. The lab was no longer empty, no longer cold and dead. There were vans outside, parked in a line, at least three of them.

Mike and Will were met by bigger men, and bigger guns at the door. They had been expecting them, it seemed, or at least they expected Mike since he and Hopper had a closer bond than Hopper and Will due to working closely together.

They were searched, and the guns they brought to protect themselves were taken from them. Both boys were rudely shoved inside, then led, with barrels against their backs, to the basement of the lab, the place they had planned to go anyways.

While Mike was glad to see Hopper alive, he was saddened by the state he was in. They had Hopper handcuffed to a chair, face bloody and bruised. Hopper surprisingly didn't seem to care about his current situation, not until Will and Mike were led in.

"Are you stupid, son? What are you doing here?" Hopper shouted

immediately, yanking violently at the cuffs around his wrists. Mike looked around the room. There couldnt be more than twelve men, which must have been some sort of cleanup crew sent to destroy evidence.

"Looking for you," Mike answered, not wanting to mention Eleven or Maggie at the moment. The girls weren't there, and Mike didnt want them to go looking for them. "The station is a mess."

"Michael Wheeler, I presume," the man Mike assumed was in charge spoke. He stepped forward, lowering his gun for a moment. "I was told you would try to be a hero. I'd like you to meet someone." The man motioned towards another across the room. "This is our scapegoat. Once we're done cleaning up this mess Dr. Brenner left, this man will take the blame. He will be held responsible for the deaths of Sheriff Jim Hopper, and the two unfortunate witnesses who stumbled upon him committing that heinous massacre at the station."

"You're a real bastard," Mike said through his teeth.

"He will also be charged with the murders of Johnathan Beyers, Nancy Wheeler, Dustin Henderson, Lucas Sinclair, and Steve Harrington. As a fanatic of the mad doctor Martin Brenner, he sought to carry out revenge on those who were responsible for his death."

"Thats a hell of a story you're trying to sell." Hopper spit blood onto the ground at the mans feet. "Nobody will buy that."

"They will. We buy the right officials, and the people buy the story." The man turned his attention to the scapegoat across the room. He motioned for him to come forward. The scapegoat did as told, walking over to Mike and, with a little help, forcing both boys down to their knees. "Please understand this is an order from above me. Not something I want to do," the man added, though he didnt seem very torn about the situation. Mike guess these men had to be paid very well for them to be willing to kill for someone.

"Dont you touch them!" Hopper snapped, thrashing roughly against the chair and the cuffs that held him there. "If you hurt them, I swear I'll -"

"You're in no better of a situation," the leader shook his. "Certianly in no position to make threats. You will die soon after, dont fret."

Mike felt the barrel of a gun press into the back of his head, and he heard Will whimper beside him. Mike put a hand over Wills arm to reassure him, though the situation was grim.

"They wont be able to sell that story. My parents wont buy it. Nobody's parents will. They know better. Its too easy."

"We have the right people in our pockets. We sell whatever story we want. We faked your death, didnt we Beyers? We covered up your miraculous return to life. Weve staged suicides. Were very thorough, and very good at our jobs."

"Benny Hammond was my friend," Hopper seethed. "You're a monster."

"A very rich monster," the man corrected without a shred of remorse or compassion. "I do what I have to do, as anyone does. We all serve somebody. I just choose to serve those more powerful than myself." He took a few steps back, then nodded at the man behind Mike. "Carry on. The sooner were done here, the better."

Mike closed his eyes and braced for whatever was to come. He wondered if there would be pain, or if it would be a loud noise, brief as a flash of lightning, then absolute darkness, nothingness. What afterlife awaited him, he wondered. Mike didnt care, if he was being honest, as long as Eleven was there. Will squeezed Mikes hand, and they both waited for the pull of the trigger.

## 28. Chapter 28

Sooo season two comes out tomorrow :) in honor of the weekend of binge ahead of all of us, Im updating both stories today! So please enjoy, and happy binging!

---

### Chapter 28:

Mike was surprised by the silence. For a moment at least, there was no sound except Will's ragged breathing beside him. The barrel of the gun left his head, and that was when he finally opened his eyes to look around.

The men with guns were all now on the floor, blood seeping from their eyes as they lay lifeless. The next sound he heard was a thud, and a frantic cry from Maggie. Will jumped to his feet, running over to the woman he'd been searching for without hesitation. Mike lifted himself, seeing Maggie and Will knelt down beside Eleven.

Her face was pale, veins dark like they always were when she had exhausted herself. Her eyes were open but fluttering, her chest heaving as she tried to keep consciousness. Mike flung himself forward to reach her as quickly as possible.

"El?" He called to her frantically, lifting her in his arms, pulling her upper body to her chest. "Eleven, are you okay?" He held her tightly. "Please be okay."

"I'm... okay," she croaked out, her arms limp against him. She had drained herself of strength in a rush to save Mike and the others. By no means did she regret it, but she had become oh so tired so very suddenly.

"Maggie needs a hospital," Will yelled to Hopper. "What do I do?"

"My radio is on my jacket. Its on the table back there," Hopper told him, motioning with his head at the corner of the room adjacent to them. Will rushed to the radio, and Mike gently lowered Eleven to go help free Hopper.

This was just another mess theyd all gotten themselves into. If Mike was being honest, he was more than tired of getting into messes. Hawkins brought nothing but pain to him for years, and it was time for it to end.

Once Hopper was free, he ran over to a panicked Will to show him out to use the beat up old radio properly. He called into dispatch, requesting an ambulance out at Hawkins Lab. When the dispatcher tried to ask what happened, Hopper yelled for them to just make the call. He shut off the radio and moved to Maggie, who was swaying dizzily now.

"El, can you climb on my back?" He asked her, gently tugging at her arms. With what little strength she could muster, she helped Mike pull her onto his back. He wrapped his arms around her legs to hold her in place. "I need to get her out of here, Hopper. Before the rest of the department shows up." Eleven had to be snuck away. Hopper had a hell of a situation to explain as it was. They didnt need Eleven to be added to the mix.

"Go. We'll take the ambulance to the hospital with Maggie," Hopper told him. "Will she be okay?"

"She needs to recharge, but she'll make it. What about Maggie? How bad is it?" Mike asked, brows furrowing as he looked over at Will. His friend was crying, holding one of Maggie's bloody hands in his own. Mike could understand what he had to have been feeling. It was painful.

"Just go," Hopper urged him, his voice soft and worried. Mike nodded, then piggybacked Eleven as carefully as he could to his car outside. He lowered her into the back seat to let her lay down, then sped off towards home.

---

Eleven accepted the glass of chocolate milk from Mike gratefully, taking a small sip of it and holding it in both hands. Mike reached around her shoulders to adjust the blankethed draped over her, making sure she was warm and comfortable.

"Thank you," she said softly, taking another sip of her milk. Mike sat

on the edge of the bed beside her, hands wringing together in his lap.

"It was very brave of you to go in there after Maggie," Mike said after a moment of silence. "You probably saved her life, if she makes it." He looked up at her. "It was a brave thing, El, but so so stupid. You dont have to go there anymore. You shouldn't go there anymore. If something happened to you, I would have never forgiven myself. If you had just waited, then I could have-"

"No," she shook her head at him, setting the glass down in her lap. "No, Mike. Im stronger. You would get hurt." She dropped her head, cheeks flushing. "I didn't want you to come."

"El..." Mike sighed deeply. "El, you are strong, but you're not invincible. Please, don't go there again. El, Im begging you. Im begging you to stay out of the Upside Down. Please." His eyes started to water. For a moment, he'd thought he lost her all over again. When she disappeared just like everyone else, he was sure that she was gone. He was so scared.

"She needed help."

"And I need *you*, El." He reached over to grab one of her small hands in his. "Youre everything to me. I felt so empty before, after you disappeared. I felt hollow. I dont ever want to feel like that again. I want to protect you, and to keep you by my side. So please. Please just promise you wont go back."

Eleven looked down for a long while, clearly deep in thought. She knew better then to lie, or to make promises she didnt plan to keep. So if she made this promise to him, for him, then she had to never go back, no matter the circumstances. If someone they cared about was taken, what would happen to them if she couldnt go in after them?

Then again, the look on Mike's face stirred up an ache in her chest. He seemed so scared, so afraid of losing her that it was going to tear him apart with worry. She had to do something, even if it wasnt something she necessarily wanted to do.

"I promise," she said after a long while of pondering. She wanted to make Mike happy, whatever the cost. "I promise, Mike."

He smiled, and it relieved that pressure in Eleven's chest. She was glad to see that smile, glad to know she was the cause of it. He squeezed her hand, then leaned forward to kiss her.

"Thank you. Thank you so much, El." He kissed her lips, her forehead, her cheeks, peppering kisses all over until she giggled and fell back on the bed. He fell over with her, holding himself above her to hover there and look down at her cute expression. "I mean it. It means the world to me."

"Good," she beamed, reaching up to run her fingers through his messy hair.

"El, what if we ran away together?" He asked suddenly.

"Ran away? From what?"

"No, I mean," he took a deep breath. "I want to take you far away from Hawkins. I have a little money saved up, and I could ask my mom for the college fund she insisted on saving for me. We can leave, and find a nice house somewhere, and we never have to worry about any of this again."

"But... friends?" She questioned. "Your family?"

"We'll come back to visit. And they can come visit us." He flopped over to lay down beside her. "This place is no good for us, El. We can't stay here forever. Bad things happen here. If we go somewhere else, there won't be an Upside Down to avoid, or monsters to fight. We can just be happy."

"Really?"

"Yes," he grinned. "We'll get a nicer place. Buy a dog." He shrugged his shoulders. "Or a cat or whatever you want." His hand moved forward to rest on her cheek. "I'll take care of you. I want us to have a life that doesn't involve pain and death. We can't have that here."

"You really want this?"

"I do."

"Okay," she finally nodded. "Okay, Mike." He grinned even wider.

"Okay? That's a yes?"

"Yes," she giggled, hugging his neck tightly. "Yes, Mike."

Mike knew moving away was a big step, a huge step even. He'd be entirely on his own, without the job at the precinct or his family to buy him food every now and then. But Mike knew he could do it. He knew they could make it on their own.

Too much bad had happened in Hawkins. It was a place that gave him nothing but suffering for years. Eleven was the whole world to him. It didn't matter where they were, as long as they were together. Leaving sounded like the right thing to do. Moving far away, in a totally quiet, dull, normal town. That's all he wanted. That and to marry Eleven.

## **29. Chapter 29**

### **Chapter 29:**

When Maggie woke, however many hours or days later, in a stiff hospital bed, she was relieved and saddened to see Will there, at her bedside with his head down on the mattress by her thigh. He was breathing softly, chest rising and falling in a slow rhythm. She wondered how long he had been there, or how long either of them had been there.

The next thing she became aware of was the bandages taped to her side. It was a bit uncomfortable, but she knew it was necessary. The gash underneath was likely sewn shut, as it had been pretty deep considering. The wound on her thigh was bandaged, too, and it was oddly more sore than the wound on her side.

"Will," she said softly, brushing her fingers through his shaggy brown hair. "Will, you should go home to rest." He stirred slightly, then sat up slowly. After rubbing his eyes, he came to the realization that Maggie was indeed awake, and she had called his name. A grin spread on his lips.

"It's good to see you awake, Maggie," he told her, taking her hand in his. "I was wondering if you were ever going to wake up again. You slept so long."

"How long?" She questioned curiously. Will pondered for a moment, then replied,

"Thirty hours or so. Over a day at least. The doctor said it was a good thing, that sleeping would help your body rest and heal quicker. So you could go home."

"I still don't like sleeping that long," she chuckled halfheartedly. "Gives me a migraine." Maggie took a moment to look around the room, wondering which room exactly she was in. It was odd for her to be the one in the hospital bed. She was so used to treating others in them.

"Maggie, I need to ask you something," Will said in a tone that made her nervous. His smile had faded, and his hands were wringing together.

"What is it?"

"Well," he sighed, "I need to know... why you had one of those eggs in your fridge. It was in a petri dish or something. I thought you had gotten rid of them. The Demogorgons, they wanted those eggs." He leaned back in his chair, bringing his fidgeting hands down into his lap. "You aren't... part of the lab are you?"

"The lab?" She scoffed, shaking her head. "Hell no. I would never work for those assholes." Her eyebrows furrowed, and she sat up further so she could reach over and touch his cheek gently. "Im sorry I kept one. I have a friend who studied zoology and cryptozoology in college. I wanted to take it to him, to see what he thought of it."

"That was so dangerous, Maggie. Those things, in that place, they're dangerous." He sucked in a deep breath this time. "It doesn't matter. Im just glad you're okay. We weren't sure... i-if you were going to make it. I thought I was going to lose you."

"You didn't," she reminded him, hoping to ease his troubled mind. "You didn't lose me. You don't have to be so afraid anymore. I'm not going anywhere, Will Byers. You're stuck with me." They laughed together briefly, then Will stood up to bend over and kiss her forehead tenderly.

"I'm glad I'm stuck with you. It's better than being without you."

"I agree," she giggled, looking up at him with a smile.

It had been a close call, that was for certain. Her life had almost been ended because of a stupid mistake she made. Will lived in a dangerous world, and that was something she was going to have to accept. If she was being honest with herself, she had already accepted it.

It didn't matter if his world was full of conspiracies and monsters and bad men with guns. It didn't matter if being with him put her life in

danger. No one had ever made her feel the way Will did. No one ever loved her that much. Maggie wanted to be in his world, monsters and bad men be damned. She wasn't going to let him go.

---

"Does Mom know?" Was Nancy's first question when Mike told her of his plan to move away with Eleven. He hadn't actually gotten around to telling his parents, and he didn't plan to until they were almost ready to leave. His mom would try to get him to stay, he was sure of it.

"No, but I will tell her before I go." He glanced down at her prominent stomach, then lifted his gaze back to hers. "Go sit down. You can't bump into anything, or you might pop."

"You're such a dork," she snorted, shoving his shoulder playfully. Mike had invited Nancy and Johnathan over, mostly so he could deliver the news. Johnathan actually thought it was a good idea, and even said he thought of doing the same. Most of them had gone through enough for one lifetime, and they wanted a fresh start.

"Hey, man, I can get that," Mike said, hurrying over to Johnathan, who was lifting a packed box for them. Before Mike could take it from it, it suddenly lifted away from Johnathan's hands, seemingly by nothing. "El, don't waste your powers on this," he nagged with a chuckle, turning his attention to her. She pouted, then lowered the box to the ground by Mike's feet. She wiped her nose with the back of her hand once it was down.

"Maybe after Nancy has the baby, we could look into relocating close to you guys," Johnathan suggested, looking over to Nancy, who had finally decided to sit down. "Hawkins is way too dangerous for a kid."

"Aren't you two having a wedding soon?" Mike asked as he stuffed some movies into a box.

"I hope so," Nancy huffed. "Even if it's a tiny church wedding with just us, I want to be married before this baby comes."

"Nance," Johnathan sighed, as if it was something they had disagreed on before. Mike glanced at Eleven, who was sitting on the ground by

a box with her legs crossed, sorting through it. She was always so cute, when she didn't realize she was being watched. She was so interested in everything. Mike loved that about her.

He stood and moved over to where she was sitting, kneeling down beside her. He looked in the box to see what had captivated her so intensely. It was a picture, the old picture of Mike, Lucas, Dustin, and Will at the only science fair they didn't win first place. The same picture she had pointed at all those years ago.

"Jeez, look at us," he smiled, lifting the picture from the box. It brought back a lot of memories of the time before all of the Hawkins Lab mess. Things were easy, and they felt safe then. He hoped, with every fiber of his being, that this move would make them feel safe again.

"You havent changed much," Nancy commented from across the room. "You just got taller."

"Dustin changed the most," Johnathan added.

"He beefed up a lot."

"And his teeth grew in," Mike chimed in. "He grew up a lot." Eleven reached into the box again, pulling out another picture. This was a strip from a photobooth, and it included pictures of him and Cathy together. He gently plucked the photo strip from her hands, then stood. "This goes in the trash."

"Is it a... couple thing?" Eleven asked, watching him drop the strip into the trash can in the kitchen. "To take pictures."

"Yes. Do you want to take pictures together?" Mike asked, moving back to where she was sitting. He crouched down by the box, searching through it quickly in hopes of removing anything with Cathy in it.

"I can do a photo session with you guys," Johnathan offered. "I do it as a side job anyways. Consider it a housewarming gift. Or a wedding gift."

"Wedding?!" Nancy demanded, eyes widening as she looked to Mike

for an explanation. "Why did I not know you were getting married?"

"Because Im not," Mike rolled his eyes. "Not yet. After we move and get settled down. Then I want to marry Eleven. So she can have a name, a real name. El Wheeler." He looked to Eleven, who was grinning and blushing at the mention of having a real name, and sharing part of that name with Mike. She couldnt be happier.

"Poor girl has no idea what she's getting into with this family," Nancy teased, laying her hand over her stomach and rubbing it gently. "It's weird," she said suddenly. "Even though it shouldve happened a long time ago, I finally feel like we're all starting our lives."

No one said anything for a long moment, reflecting on her statement for a few minutes in silence. Eleven had moved on to another box, digging through it curiously. It was the only sound in the room until Mike spoke.

"Eleven is my life," he said sincerely. "It couldn't have started... not until she came back to me." He leaned over to kiss her softly, and Nancy and Johnathan exchanged proud smiles.

Their lives really were about to begin, and they were both terrfied and thrilled. Nancy would have a child soon, Johnathan's child. Soon after they would be married. Mike and Eleven were leaving Hawkins, and once they found a place to settle, they, too, would be married.

It was a lot to happen quickly, but much of it was long overdue anyways. Mike had told the truth when he said Eleven was his life. With her at his side now, he looked forward to the future. He was excited for rhe future. All because she would be in it. Eleven was his past, his present, and his future.

---

Hope you guys enjoyed! The next chapter will be the last, and will be an epilogue of sorts :) so be prepared for happy fluff and super emotional moments. Itll be long and beautiful, I hope lol cant wait to write it!

## **30. Chapter 30**

Chapter 30:

The wedding was beautiful. They both were. First came Johnathan and Nancys. Of course Will, Dustin, Mike, and Lucas were all groomsmen. Even Steve, who had become a welcome addition to the group after all they had gone through together. From the Upside Down, to Hawkins Lab, their shared trauma forged a new, unexpected friendship.

Nancy looked beautiful on their wedding day, but Johnathan couldn't help but think she looked even more beautiful holding that baby girl in her arms. Her face lit up, everytime their daughter yawned, smiled, or giggled. Nancy was a natural at being a mother, and Johnathan hoped he could be just as good of a dad.

Eight months later, Mike arranged a small, sudden wedding at a little church in the tiny town in Georgia he and Eleven moved to. Only their closest family and friends were allowed, though he politely extended an invitation to Jesse.

Hopper showed up in his uniform, but his age was really beginning to show. As it turned out, he and Wills mom had made their relationship official. Everyone happy for them, and the two never seemed so happy. They showed up together, Joyce holding onto Hoppers arm like it had been something shed wanted to do for ages.

Joyce and Nancy were the ones who dressed up Eleven. They worked together, fitting her white lace dress to hug her waist and flow freely around her legs. Nancy did her makeup, as Joyce wasnt so good at such things anymore. It had been a long time since shed dressed up herself.

Even though they had written their own vows, Mike was speechless when the doors opened and Eleven started down the isle. Seeing her, dressed in white with pretty pink lips and big bright eyes, the breath left his lungs. All he could do was stand there and stare at her. She was so beautiful, so pure, even after all she suffered through, all the pain and violence inflicted upon her.

Mike had promised himself that he would stay rigid, stay calm. But as Eleven stumbled through her vow, making sure to carefully pronounce the words she understood, words Mike taught her, he couldn't control the tears that welled in his eyes. She paused in the middle of her vow, afraid she was disappointing him or upsetting him. He was crying, and it worried her.

"Mike?" She had whispered to him.

"Im sorry," he sniffed, quickly wiping at his eyes. "Keep reading, Im okay. Im just so happy. Im so so happy, El." She smiled, then, as he smiled, too. It was then that Eleven learned that Mike could cry when he was happy, that tears weren't always from pain. Mike had taught her so many things, but that was one of her favorite things to learn.

Eleven understood even better as Mike read his own vows.

"I wish I could show you to emptiness I felt when you were gone," he told her, taking deep breaths to steady his voice. "Maybe then you would know just how miserable I was and am without you. You are the only..." He sighed, blinking a tear from his eye. "You're the only thing in my life that makes me feel whole. I know you don't understand marriage as well as other people do. So let me explain what it means to me."

"Dont cry," Eleven whispered, reaching over to grab his hand. Hopper rubbed Joyces back as she cried happy tears, and Nancy bounced her sleeping baby in her lap gently. Will held Maggie's hand, hoping someday soon they could share the same moment.

"Okay," he cleared his throat. "To me, this ring, and this moment, is a promise. Something I will never break or dream of ever breaking. Its a promise to love you... to cherish you... and to make you smile for as long as I live. You will always be my friend, my..." He sniffed. "My love, my world. Marriage is a promise, and it's a promise I only want to make to you. I promise you forever. And our forever starts today."

He put the ring on her finger, a small silver band with a pretty white diamond. It fit her perfectly, and it looked so good on her hand. She put the ring on his finger, and hand her hand up next to his. The rings were a promise, something that tied them together even when

they were apart. She liked that about them.

They kissed, long and passionate, as everyone else cheered and clapped for them. Hopper was surprised to see the kids he had protected for so long, grow up right there in front of his eyes. A young man that loved a young woman. They werent kids anymore.

Dustin and Lucas drank an awful lot after the wedding. Will joined, but he didnt have as much since he and Maggie had plans after. Steve drank with them, or more accurately, outranked them. They played games for a few hours.

Once everyone began heading home, back to their hotel, or to Hawkins if they were making the drive, Mike drove Eleven back to their little townhouse he was renting.

He opened her car door for her, helping her out then scooping her up in his arms, holding her like the new bride she was. She put her arms around his neck, hugging him close as he carried her to the front door. Mike struggled a bit to open the door without letting her slip, so she focused enough to open it for him, no hands needed.

Mike had been waiting all night to be alone with her, to have her pressed against him. He didnt even take off her dress, just the white underwear she wore underneath. They kissed heatedly, clinging to each other, feeling whatever skin they could feel.

He pushed up her dress, sliding the lace fabric up her soft thighs so he could get between her legs. Mike was quick to undo his belt, his lust for her overtaking his care for the clothes he was wearing. Nothing was taken off completely, only pushed out of the way enough for him to slip into her.

He kissed her just as she began to moan, and he kissed her so much that night that he was surprised she ever found time to breathe. Mike felt sorry for the neighbors, as he wasnt going to bother holding back to keep it quiet.

They had made love so many times, and somehow, it felt so different. Maybe because of the circumstances around it, the marriage and the eternal promise they had made. It was an incredible night, tangled up

in half removed clothes and each others limbs.

When they woke the next morning, they would wake as husband and wife. Eleven may not have understood what being a wife meant at the time, but she would learn. Mike would teach her as he had taught her so many things, and he would continue to teach her for the rest of their lives.

---

Mike paced the hospital corridor, chest heaving with worry. Eleven was in so much pain, and she had cried on him for the past hour. The doctor shooed him from the room, saying that it was better if he wasnt there for the moment.

Still, he could hear her screaming his name from inside the room, begging for him. It tore his heart in two. He couldnt bear to lose her. It would shatter his whole world. They had been married only two years, and he wasnt ready for it to be over.

Tears stung his own eyes, but he kept them back as long as he could. When the doctor came out of the room, and it was silent for the first time in hours, he couldnt hold back the tears anymore. He rushed to the doctor, those tears running down his cheeks now.

"Did she make it?" He asked first. "Please tell me she's going to be okay. Please," he begged the doctor.

"Take a breath," the doctor urged Mike. "She's going to be okay," he smiled softly, and relief washed over Mike like a tidal wave in a stormy sea. He almost stumbled back at the sheer force of it. "She did good, Mr. Wheeler. Your wife is going to be okay. Would you like to see her?"

"Yes," he sobbed out with a soft smile. "Please."

Eleven was a little out of it when he walked into the room. She looked up at him, eyes glazed over with what he could only imagine was a mixture of drugs meant to reduce her pain. Somehow she managed a groggy smile when she saw him.

"Mike," she whimpered out, trying to sit up.

"Whoa, whoah, whoah," he panicked, rushing over to lay her back down gently. "Take it easy, El." He looked behind him and pulled up a chair to sit beside her bed. He stroked her hair lovingly, ignoring the sweat that stuck her hair to her face. "You did so good, El. You did good."

"Mr. Wheeler," a nurse called from the doorway. Mike stood as the nurse walked in with a little bundle in her arms. "Is your wife awake enough to hold your son?"

"Yes," he nodded, walking over to meet her at the door. He peeled back the little blue blanket to see the baby's face. "Oh," he sniffed. "Poor little guy. He has my nose." He laughed, trying to hide the new tears forming in his eyes. "May I?" He took the bundle from the nurse gently, cradling it like it held glass within in.

Eleven struggled but managed to sit up, so Mike lowered the baby into her arms. Eleven stared down at the little miracle, something that caused her so much pain, and yet brought her so much joy in that moment.

"He is beautiful," she smiled. "Like you," Eleven glanced up at Mike. She winced a little, so Mike took their son from her arms.

"Lay down, El. You worked hard, so rest now." He frowned at the condition she was in, but he was relieved that both Eleven and the baby would be okay. It was touch and go for awhile. The doctor said that Eleven's body was rejecting them and rejecting the baby as it strained her body more and more. Mike was begging any and every deity he could think of to spare her.

Eleven laid back down, slipping into unconsciousness again.

"Benny," she muttered.

"What?" Mike asked, moving closer to hear her.

"Call him Benny," she said as she closed her eyes. "Benjamin. But we call him Benny."

"Why Benny?" He asked, though she was close to sleeping. "El?" He wanted to wake her and ask her why, but she had already drifted off.

Even though it confused him, he went along with her decision, and their son was named Benjamin Luke Wheeler. He decided on his middle name since Eleven was asleep, and the first cool name he could think of was Luke Skywalker, so Luke it was.

She stayed in the hospital for a few days, but she got better quicker than the doctor expected. But Mike wasn't surprised. Eleven had always been strong, the strongest person he had ever known. He hoped their little boy would grow up as strong as his mother. Mike was just grateful that little Benny would get to grow up with his mother.

It was a new beginning for them, just as their wedding was. Mike's life was rushing at him, and it hit him then, that he had arrived at the future he always wanted with Eleven. After all they had been through, with monsters, mad doctors, and two miscarriages, they were finally able to bring life into the world. A little blue bundle, with Mike's nose, that they would protect at all costs. Monsters and mad doctors be damned.

Mike later learned that little Benny was named after the man who found Eleven first, who fed and clothed her, who tried to help her and was killed for it. Eleven had never had a chance to say thank you, and sometimes, Mike would hear her whispering her thanks to baby Benny as if he was the same man that saved her all those years ago.

He loved her, and he loved that little boy. His world had grown to fit both his wife and his son inside of it. Mike knew he had to live for them both, to work hard to provide and give them everything they wanted. He looked forward to every day with them, and he couldn't wait to live the rest of his life with the woman he loved, and the child they brought into the world together.

---

Well that was it guys! I hope it didn't disappoint, and I hope you enjoyed :) it made me sad to see the story end as it certainly felt like quite the journey. I hope it was good of a journey for you guys as it was for me. Thank you so much to every single one of you that read this story! I hope it brought you the same joy it brought me :)